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HAZEL NORTHROP

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By

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—*Lookout.*

"A STRANGE BROTHER OF OURS"
FROM AFRICA

Stories From 'Round the World

By
HAZEL NORTHROP

NEW YORK CHICAGO
Fleming H. Revell Company
LONDON AND EDINBURGH

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To
My Mother
CORA BANKS PIERCE
"Loved long since and lost awhile"

FOREWORD

PERHAPS some people will like to know that the stories in this book are all authentically heathenish. That is, they are each one founded on some true incident of heathendom, and are not, as might be supposed, but weird imaginings of a young author's brain. Also, none of these incidents have been heightened in order to make a good story, but several of them have been considerably toned down, that they might not be too horrible. The hard-boiled cynic is supposed to raise a questioning eyebrow when America is spoken of as a Christian nation. Let him but reflect that in Christian lands horrors are labelled "Horrors." In lands where Christ has not been born horrors are labelled "Customs."

Also, please believe that the author has had a perfectly lovely time writing of these "horrors," these fiendish customs, these whatever-they-may-be kind of stories. The heathen, whatever else you can say of them, are so delightfully illogical, so exactly like the rest of us, given their chance, their environment.

May you like 'em, too, these People Who Know No Better, these strange brothers of ours.

H. N.

CEDAR BEACH, MILFORD, CONN.

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AFRICA

I

The Horse Which Bought Lella a Dress

ALTHOUGH Lella Moryem lived as far away as any little girl you ever heard of, when she was nine years old she wanted a new dress. Of course she had lots of dresses, but being nine is quite different from being eight, so you see——

Anyway, Lella Moryem's father was the pasha of a great old Morocco city, and as the pasha is a kind of governor, everybody had to do exactly as he said, that is, everybody but Lella herself. You needn't tell this, but the pasha had to do exactly as Lella said, but I guess he didn't know that. It happened, though, that Lella's mother was the pasha's favourite wife. He had lots of wives, I don't know exactly how many, and I'm not sure that the pasha did either. But Lella's mother was the youngest and the prettiest, and Lella was her mother's only little girl—so——

Anyway, when Lella's mother told Lella's daddy that it really was time for Lella to have that dress, the pasha looked very queer.

"Just see this lovely stuff," said Lella's mother,

and showed him a tid-bit of white tulle. It was embroidered all over in garlands, oh, the loveliest in the world, and anybody but a stuffy old pasha would have loved it.

Instead of loving it, the pasha drew his thunderous eyebrows together in a perfectly awful Mohammedan way he had and rumbled, "Why do you show this nonsense to me? Do you suppose I am a Kissaria?"

A Kissaria, of course, is a market where one buys cloth, and really when he drew himself up, and puffed himself out, with his baggy sleeves and bulgy garments wound round him, he really looked as if he could do quite a retail trade in his own clothes. I am sure if anybody had ever dared unwind him, they could have cut about seventeen pairs of sleeves out of his bloomers alone.

Lella's mother wrinkled her pretty face to a pout. "Oh, my husband," she said, "everybody will laugh at me if Lella has no new tfina for her ninth year. They will say, 'The wife of the pasha knows no more about dressing her child than a Bedouin woman!'"

The pasha gazed at his beautiful wife and slowly unbent his awful eyebrows. "Ah, Cherifa," he said, "you on whom Allah has lavished his grace, making you whiter than silver money, you shall have many lengths of this stuff. Send your old Jewess to the shop of Si Mohamed al Frai and tell him the pasha will pay at the first of the harvest."

The pasha's wife looked suddenly ready to cry and ready to throw something. "But old Friha has been to the shop of that wretched Si Mohamed al Frai," she mourned, "and he says he will not give her more cloth, no, not until the wife of Hakem sends money!"

Hakem, the pasha turned a queer interesting lettuce colour, and his long pale fingers began to twitch in fury. "So!" he fumed, "Si Mohamed laughs at the wife of Hakem! May he die like a pig, so help me all the Saints of Islam, may peace be upon them!" Then he turned and left the room.

Now I do blush to tell you what the pasha did then. Just because Lella wanted a new dress, he did do something perfectly awful. And it wasn't as if Lella's dress was to be made up by a different pattern from her old dress. Oh, no! It was to be cut exactly like her grandmother's and her mother's, and everybody else's dress; a perfectly tremendous kimono, with a belt and a turban and no more style than your mother's rag-bag. I don't mean Lella would look ragged, but when she was all dressed up she would look exactly like your mother's *new* rag-bag, just ready to hang in the attic! And her father made all that muss, just for that!

He was a smart old pasha or he never would have thought of it. He knew that until the next harvest he could not squeeze any more money out of the

town for his expenses. The last harvest had been bad. That had meant less money, and now the tribesmen of the country very near by threatened mutiny. That meant more expense, just when the pasha needed every cent for his own family. And family! why he had more immediate children than the Old Woman in the Shoe ever heard of. Still, they could hardly be spanked and sent to bed, even if they did have their broth for the next two months without any bread. And now Lella's dress—— He really needed ten or fifteen thousand dollars, but how should he raise even a silly little sum like that?

He thought and thought. The cloth merchants had been so mean—they would not even trust him with enough cloth for Lella's dress——. Wouldn't it be very nice and funny if somehow that old Si Mohamed al Frai, the cloth merchant, could be got to give Lella her dress, and be made ridiculous doing it?—Yes, but how? The wicked old pasha drew his eyebrows together until they looked like a straight black buckle to buckle down his nose. Ha! Ha! He had it! Horses! Si Mohamed rode a fat mule through the streets when he did not walk. But he would rather die than ride a horse. No town man liked horses. Even the pasha felt that way. The pasha owned one stallion, it is true, a miserable gray beast that fought every other horse it met and always tried to throw its rider. The pasha shivered at the mere

thought of the animal. Being a Moorish townsman is different from being an Arab of the country. And suppose the Arab tribes should be in revolt! Ha! Ha! He had it, his nice, funny plan. He snickered and went to bed.

Next morning everybody in town knew that there was danger! The surrounding tribes, everybody heard, had revolted. They threatened to sweep down upon the city. Of course the city walls might defend the town, but the suburbs must be defended. Horsemen must go straight out,—patrol the gardens, the fields—or there would be no next harvest, and the city would starve! The pasha had men to patrol the fields, but no horses! So each city merchant must send the pasha one horse! And be quick about it!

Not one of the merchants owned a horse, or wanted to own one. Nor did a single merchant want to buy a horse either! So for three days nothing happened.

On the night of the fourth day, about half-past ten or eleven o'clock, that old dry goods merchant, Si Mohamed, was just kicking off his nice red slippers with the curled-up toes, when the most horrible knocking began on his nail-studded door. His face turned first red, then white, and then blue, and he pulled his bed blanket around his shoulders and called out to know what in the mercy of Allah was wanted.

"Open in the name of the Pasha!"

So he shivered and shook while he drew bolts and turned keys, and stuck out his old head to ask what the pasha kindly wanted.

"We have come for your horse," thundered the master of the pasha's household, and as he said it a dozen wicked-looking soldiers closed in a circle about the door, like a dozen black crows.

"My horse?" shivered Si Mohamed feebly.

"Did not the pasha order a horse from you? Are not the tribes in open revolt? You must send the pasha a horse by dawn!"

The old merchant looked at the soldiers and shivered and shook. "I have been searching for a horse," he lied glibly. "High and low, I have looked for a horse. I have left no stone unturned, but I cannot find one, so help me Allah and bring confusion to all his enemies!"

"So you have no horse!" The master of the pasha's household and the soldiers drew closer. "Then I have orders to arrest and imprison you!"

"Help me! Pity me!" screamed Si Mohamed. "To-morrow I will find one!"

"To-morrow is too late! Come with me!"

"Help! Pity! Save me!" screamed the merchant again, and began to cry real tears into his blanket. "You are a true and generous man! Think of your old father! Soften your heart, I pray you!"

The pasha's servant stopped and looked down at the old merchant, who had thrown himself in trop-

ical abandonment at his feet. Then he smiled to himself and said, "And if I pity you, how will that help? Do you want me to sacrifice my own horse to you, so that you may hand it over to the pasha?"

The merchant kissed the servant's shoes. "Yes! Yes!" he cried. "Oh, worthy man, how much will you take for your horse?"

"Two hundred and ninety dollars!"

"Two hundred and ninety dollars!" shrieked Si Mohamed, and jumped to his feet as if he had been stung by two hundred and ninety wasps. "Impossible! Where would I find so huge a sum? Who would lend it to a miserable old man like me? Oh, kind and just sir, have pity!"

The pasha's servant looked at the old man as much as to say, "All right for you, you dear old thing!" Then turning to the soldiers, "Arrest this man!" he commanded.

The twelve soldiers grabbed him by his blanket.

"Stop! Help! Oh, saints of Islam help me to find two hundred and ninety dollars for this avaricious man! No! Stop! I will pay!" He fled indoors without his blanket, and after a second reappeared, carrying a dirty little bag. "Two hundred and ninety dollars!" he moaned through his trembly old nose, which sounded like a trombone.

The master of the pasha's household opened the bag and counted the money. Then he ordered the soldiers to bring forward the horse. Si Mohamed took the animal gingerly by the rope. It was of a

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pasty gray colour, with eyes that burned like hot coals in the night. As Si Mohamed took hold of the rope it gave a fiendish neigh and reared. Si Mohamed dropped it and screamed, rushing into his doorway.

"See here!" the servant scolded, "that is no way to act. Take the horse at once or he will run away, and then what will you do?"

"Can I take him into my carpeted courtyard? My house is full of women! Must I stand here and hold him all night? He will undoubtedly kill me if I touch him!" And the old merchant began to sob the most heartrending tears all over his underskirts.

"Perhaps," hesitated the servant, "I could take him to the pasha's stables for you. That is, if you could afford to pay me a little extra for my trouble!"

"Yes! Yes!" Si Mohamed agreed, and rushed back into the house. "Take this, my good friend, my saviour," he cried, rushing out again, and squeezed another bag of money into the servant's hands.

The pasha's servant took this bag and counted it. The soldiers took the horse. They also took the merchant's blanket. Si Mohamed watched them go, and he gulped, but he never said a word.

The next morning, bright and early, an old Jewess went to the shop of Si Mohamed al Frai and bought yards and yards of the loveliest white tulle,

all embroidered in garlands. There was plenty of money to pay for it, too.

I do not know what the old merchant thought, but I do know that before noon he found out that every other merchant in the city last night had bought a gray horse for the pasha. That afternoon the pasha told the world that he had been able to make peace with the surrounding tribes. Then he ordered his horse to be brought from its stable. It was a vicious old thing. It stamped and neighed, and it looked like a regular nightmare. But the pasha smiled and rubbed his hands while he told his slave that, "Ha! Ha! he should give that good beast a double portion of barley!"

Lella's father was a smart man, wasn't he? But would you want a daddy like him? Well, neither would I!

AFRICA

II

The Man With the Solid Gold Ribs

WHEN I first heard of Rhodesia, I thought it was one of my grandmother's comets. I had heard the word before, so I expected it was one of her *old* comets!

She had always indulged her love of applied astronomy by dosing me with stars; so many stars after dinner, every night!

I gulped 'em down, because it was cold on winter evenings when she was fondest of taking me out on the door-step to get 'em applied to me, and I hated to stay a second longer than I had to.

It had become a habit with me, when anybody asked me a difficult word which sounded vaguely familiar, to say I thought it was a star in the constellation of Orion or something, and usually it was. But this time it wasn't.

My grandmother, who always helps me with my geography after school, not because I ask her to, but because she has as great a passion for applying continents to me as stars, was terribly upset that

I had Rhodesia in my head as a comet. You would think I had done damage to the Milky Way. She said I was to find every item I could about Rhodesia in the newspapers and bring it to her! And I was to look it up on the map! I did look it up on the map, but it wasn't there! Then my grandmother looked it up, and there it was down in Africa, just ready to slide into the Indian Ocean! She can do things like that. She's pointed out stars to me that I've read astronomers can't see without a hundred-foot telescope lens,—Arcterus, and Betelgeuse, and Mars, I think.

Of course all this sounds as if it had nothing to do with the man who had gold ribs and a platinum skull, but it comes right in where she asked me to find every item I could about Rhodesia in the newspapers.

I must tell you, however, that since I was six I have taken a heathenish joy in writing prose and poetry. Let no one slide over this remark with a light eye. If you've ever had the same experience you know that inspiration always comes just as you begin to comb your hair for school mornings, and just when you ought to be studying your geography nights.

My grandmother was very much annoyed that I should indulge in this primitive pastime, and so on the historic evening when she found me creating a pale young orphan behind the covers of my geography she put a ban and a taboo upon all further

literary work. "Until you know *all* the capitals of *all* the states in the United States," she amended. As I saw no hope of ever knowing all the capitals at one time, I immediately wound up the affairs of my orphan, who had been wandering vaguely about Druid woods, by allowing her to be consumed by a prehistoric animal with a chilly-sounding name, which I coined, but have since forgotten.

I then set to work to comb the newspapers for Rhodesia. And such is the good fortune of the innocent, that almost at once I found two items which exactly suited my needs. The first item had nothing to do with Rhodesia, but for purposes of my own I cut it out and pinned it into my forbidden composition book, the next page after the chilly orphan's demise.

You notice that I did not take this news item to my grandmother. It wasn't about Rhodesia, anyway. It read like this:

"Has Platinum Skull and Solid Gold Ribs

"Berlin, Feb. 22.—Breslau, in Silicia, boasts of a citizen who is outfitted with a set of golden ribs, and every stranger who visits the city is regaled with the story of this man and his abnormal anatomy.

"While at work on the roof of a three-story house he was knocked off his feet by a strong gust of wind and dropped to the ground. The physicians diagnosed his case as hopeless, his skull having been badly fractured and all of his ribs with the exception of one, completely crushed.

"After lying in the hospital for four years, he was removed to a surgical clinic where a platinum plate was inserted into his skull and new ribs made of gold were carefully fastened into place. This delicate process of grafting occupied nearly three years, after which the man was dismissed and has since been employed by a cigar factory.

"Not having the means of undergoing an operation involving large quantities of the two costliest metals, gold and platinum, the man applied to his trades union, which agreed to advance the money on the condition that their comrade's family give a written pledge that upon his death the metals would revert to the association.

"The man is still living, and the trades union now looks upon him as a peripatetic gold mine, owing to the sharp advance made in all precious metals, but especially platinum, by reason of the war.

"It is said the man lives in constant fear of being kidnapped since learning of the daily so-called 'metal thefts' reported from Berlin and other German centers."

This was rich. It was perfectly rich. I thought so then, and I still think so, and it would have been a crime not to have outfitted a man like that with a mighty jazzy plot. Right there I found my second news item. This one was about Rhodesia, but I didn't take it dutifully to my grandmother either. I pinned it in the book beside my man with gold ribs. It read like this:

"Burned Man Alive to Please God

"Sacrifice of Son by Father to End a Drought in Rhodesia is Reported

"(Special Correspondence of the News)

"London, Feb. 22.—Advices received from Bulawayo indicate that the custom of human sacrifice to allay the wrath of the gods still exists in Rhodesia.

"It is reported that the elders of the Mtawara tribe, alarmed at the drought and poor crops, consulted the rain doctor, and decided on what they claim to be the never-failing expedient of human sacrifice by burning. The lot fell on a native who was discovered to be the son of the rain doctor, who, however, proceeded with the sacrifice. The struggling man was bound and burned alive. Directly life was extinct heavy rains began.

"The celebrations of the success of the sacrifice were interrupted by the arrival of the police. The elated tribe, not aware of having done wrong, showed the police the charred remains of the victim and told them of previous occasions on which similar sacrifices had been equally successful, the last one mentioned being in 1917.

"They assert that the 'rain spirit' whose name is Mwari, lives in their district. The local paramount chief is said to remember seventy-two natives who have been burned as rain sacrifices.

"Many natives are reported to have been committed for trial. The scene of the sacrifice is said to be Chicangos Kraal on the Portuguese border in Southern Rhodesia."

Well, this was perfectly rich, too. I could have shrieked for joy. Then I grabbed a pencil, and the man with gold ribs, the rain spirit and I all

began to ferment together. I wrote a gorgeous masterpiece in about forty-eight minutes, the story of a man with gold ribs down in Rhodesia, who, of course, was burned alive. If you've ever tried to write for publication (being accepted is a different proposition) you realize how simple it was for me to transfer the hero of Silicia to Rhodesia.

After I had the man burned up and quite extinct, I let the police poke among the ashes for his gold ribs awhile. Then I went at my geography, and after I'd learned the capitals of the North Atlantic and Middle Atlantic States, I called it a day.

That night right after dinner I said, "Grandma, listen to this story I been writing!"

"*Do you know the cap*——" she began with thunderous eyes.

"I know 'em in chunks and installments," I interrupted, and I said 'em aloud, the North and Middle ones, and then she said she'd listen.

"The name of it is: 'The Man With the Solid Gold Ribs.'" I told her.

"What?" said grandmother. I told her again and then I read it.

Well, she listened with that expression on her face which you always expect a critic to wear. I always think of critics as the twelve sons of Jacob sitting on their thrones and judging the twelve tribes of Israel, the hateful things!

"Most anything would be better!" grandmother remarked grandly, when I had finished.

"*Why* would it?" I snapped testily. But I was quite old enough to know, even then, that if you let your story percolate through a critic, Postum Cereal is the result, or something equally healthful and horrid tasting.

"You are just like me," grandmother went on. "I was a very rash child."

"Well, never mind that," I said, "but what's the matter with my story?"

"It is so utterly impossible," she said, and sighed. "In the first place doctors don't graft gold ribs, and in the second place the Rhodesians don't burn their citizens alive!"

"Don't they, then?" *I* now remarked grandly in turn, and I produced those two newspaper clippings and shoved them under her nose. "Read *these!*" I said in triumph.

She read 'em, and she sat musing a good while after, and didn't notice what I was about. In that interval I had resurrected my pale young orphan, snatched her from the jaws of the prehistoric monster, sent a cave man hurtling toward her with his weighty javelin poised at the beast, and a terrible pliocene yell issuing from his lips.

That's all, only grandmother still sticks out about any Rhodesian man having gold ribs. Maybe

it isn't done in South Africa, but if it could be managed in Germany, I should think it could anywhere, and any writer knows that you've got to allow for a little leeway, now and then. I wish any critic did.

AFRICA

III

The Drum and the Poison Bean

IT must have begun when Evindi was a little girl and wore a bustle of dried grasses at her back, like every other little girl. It was a very dressy bustle, all coloured black and orange, and it made a proud little rustling sound against her oiled thighs as she walked in the hot sunshine. In fact, if Evindi had been a little London girl, instead of a little African girl, she would have thought her bustle looked exactly like a cabby horse's tail—only a cabby horse never has a tail black and orange at the same time!

Evindi, then, seemed exactly like every other girl that she knew. She was going to be married to a proud old Chief of another village. He had paid not only ivory tusks, but goats, sheep and dogs for Evindi, though not quite as much as her father had asked! Evindi was glad to be married to this Chief for two reasons. The first one was, that she would not be a stranger in this new town, for her older sister was already the Chief's favourite wife. The second reason was that Evindi's older brother

made a regular little slave of her. Of course every girl is her brother's "thing"—always subject to his will, and Evindi's brother was not a meek little boy!

At such an important time in her life, Evindi, like everybody else, felt the need of some good-luck spirit to attend her. She had no God she could pray to, for Zambee, the Great-Great, the Creator, had long since gone away and forgotten the people. And although the world was full of Spirits, they were unfriendly spirits. They did not like, or want women. Little girls must not dare come into the presence of an idol! So the best thing for Evindi to do was to have her fortune told.

There was an old woman of Evindi's village who told the most exciting fortunes, for she was wise in the things of witchcraft. And it must have been, then, while Evindi clung to the words of this woman, that all which was to happen afterwards, was made possible.

The old woman put a porcupine's quill out on a board, and a piece of a leopard's hide, and a stone from a crocodile's stomach, and a piece of a hawk, and a crystal. Over these she shook a lot of ant-eater's scales marked with such questions as: "Shall I marry?" "Shall I buy that cow?" "Shall I quit drinking rum?" The way the scales fell over the porcupine quill, the leopard's skin and all the rest, decided forever how things would turn out! Evindi looked at her fortune spread out be-

fore her, and oh, but she was scared! Here she was, going out of all the world she knew—into all the strange world she didn't know! She was so frightened that at first she could not hear what the old woman said. And when she did hear, she was much too frightened to move. The old woman said—oh, honestly, the old woman must have had jaundice and seen through yellow eyes that day!—she said that Evindi never would be happy in her married life. That only one happiness would come to her! That she would be in great peril, and that if she ever saw her native town again she could thank her lucky moon!

Evindi had to go twenty miles down the Bulu path toward the sunrising, on the trail to her husband's town, with those dreadful words ringing in her ears. Her family followed her, singing the songs of marriage, and Evindi was afraid. From that day, when she came to the house of strange women, the older wives of her husband, she was afraid. She had almost forgotten her sister, the old Chief's favourite, who had grown very fat, and a darker brown, and had many children. Of course the other wives did not like Evindi much, and her sister did not like her at all. How did she know but Evindi would be the favourite wife now? She was so much younger! So, although Evindi had escaped from her bossy brother, who still said the Chief had not paid goats enough for Evindi, and that some day he was going to call her back to her

native kraal, she was not happy. She was forever looking for the awful thing which was to happen to her, and trying witch spells to keep it away.

The old witch had told Evindi, however, that there was one great happiness to come into her life. And when her baby boy was born, little Fozo'o, Evindi knew that this had happened. Oh, he was a splendid baby! Evindi hung the tiny horn of the pigmy antelope about his neck to protect him from danger! She also took him one secret night out alone, under the full moon. She held a lighted torch in her other hand, and dared all the enemies of her child to harm him! Then she extinguished the torch, to show how all the enemies of her child should be extinguished! And she prayed that her boy might shine with such splendour as shone the moon, even with such great glory! Was she not a wise Evindi, so to protect her little boy? Ah, and as he grew older she taught him to make a little offering of grass or a leaf he had spit upon, to every tree trunk which leaned over the path, and every tower-house built by ants! And by so doing, Fozo'o certainly grew to be the strongest, finest boy of all his father's children. The old Chief, his father, loved him above everybody and everything, and for that reason all the other boys hated him, and the boys' mothers hated Evindi. So it was until Fozo'o came to his tenth year.

In that year Fozo'o, who never had been at all fussy about clothes, and who had worn nothing

until he was six, and after that sometimes a little loin cloth his mother made of bark, wanted a real loin cloth of red red cloth, such as you have to buy from traders at the coast.

It took three days to go to the coast to shop, and the way lay through the Bulu forest. In the forest, feeling perfectly at home and sometimes inquisitive, were monkeys, snakes, deer, wild cattle, and leopards. No lions! No tigers! Yet enough animals to keep a person busy, if they all became interested in him at the same time! So when Fozo'o wanted a piece of red cloth, he had to wait until other boys of the village wanted some too, and made so much fuss about it that the Chief would send a carrier, if there was little to buy, and two or three carriers if there was much to bring home. There would be kettles wanted at the last minute, and matches, and all sorts of things which one buys of the white men these days!

How could Evindi know that Fozo'o's little red loin cloth was to bring her all her trouble? She wanted him to have it! He was such a big boy now! It was like getting one's first pair of long trousers! All the other mothers wanted their sons to have red loin cloths, too! They all hated Evindi! Their sons all hated Fozo'o! Nobody will ever know whether those other wives got together and planned it, or what. But anyway, when the bearers returned from the coast with the yards of red cloth, and the cloth was measured off, it was

found that there was enough for every single boy but Fozo'o! Measure it whatever way you wanted to, and Evindi did measure it every way you ever heard of, there was not one speck, not one thread of a loin cloth for Fozo'o! The monkeys from the forest, who had followed the bearers back, sat over her head and watched Evindi try to find a speck of cloth large enough for Fozo'o. And the women watched. And they all chattered and laughed, monkeys and wives together.

The men did not notice. For all they thought of was the fire water, which *they* had sent for in great jugs, as red as the cloth, and as strong! And all that night while Evindi and Fozo'o sat apart in hate and fury, the town drank the fire water and danced. The dance-drum went thump! thump! thump! for hours and hours. The leading female ballet did her stuff in the middle of a ring of 5,000, more or less, dancing boys, and there were tom-toms and ga-gomas and tooth-ticklers, and a wonderful ladder with tuned rungs which made a series of shrieks when rightly pounded, besides ever so many empty turtle shells rattling with pebbles. Why, you could hear a jazz band like that from Brooklyn Bridge to Grant's Tomb! Fozo'o, who knew how to beat a drum, kept time with his toes, hour after hour, while he sat in his mother's round grass house.

Of course, when Fozo'o knew how to beat a drum, that meant the dance drum, which looked

like an American drum. But there was the war drum, which looked like a horse's watering-trough and which he was never allowed to touch. There was also the drum which was kept in the Chief's Palaver house which Fozo'o knew about, too. That was the Carrier's drum, and was shaped like a horseshoe made of tin horns with a handle. The wonderful thing about that drum was that it was like a radio set for twenty miles around. All you had to do was to call a man by his " drum name," with so many taps of the Carrier's drum, and tell him what you wanted in drum language, with just so many more taps, and he would hear you and understand! That drum is worn by a cord fastened around the neck, and no chief is ever without one. But of course on that wild night nobody thought about any drum but the dance drum.

Next morning there was a great stillness through the village. Everybody but Evindi and Fozo'o had drank fire water, and there was much sleepiness and grunting and snoring, and growling and quarreling. The quarreling began in little whispers and whimpers, but gradually, as everybody awoke, it became louder, and when everybody had rubbed their eyes it was remembered about Fozo'o and the little red loin cloth. The women jeered at Evindi about it, and the boys jeered at Fozo'o! And then suddenly their jeers became growls and their growls a terrible long sound which woke even the Chief.

The cloth—the red loin cloth—for all the boys—

was gone! They looked in every house, in the Palaver house! They looked in every corner! It was gone, all of it! There were a few red threads caught on the rough bark of the tree under which Evindi had stood trying to measure out enough cloth for Fozo'o when the women and monkeys watched and laughed at her! Clearly Evindi had stolen back in the night and taken it! Evindi, who had not danced last night! The only thing to do, of course, was to prove it, and the way to prove it was to give Evindi trial by the poison bean. The poison bean is deadly poison. You make a drink of the poison bean and then give it to the person you suspect, and if they drink it and live they are innocent, but if they drink it and die they are guilty! None of those who drank the poison bean ever lived, the guilty creatures! And that's what they decided to do to Evindi.

Evindi knew she had not taken the red cloth, though she wished she had! Probably one of the monkeys had stolen it! But who could follow and bring a monkey back to justice? Evindi thought over all her life, and all that the old witch lady had told her, and she saw it was true. She must die! She wished now that she had never left her home and her bossy brother. Fozo'o, who sat near her, crying, for he loved his mother, heard her lamenting for her old home, and suddenly an idea came into his head. He did not tell his mother, however, but he got up and left her.

She cried after him. Could he not sit beside her the last day of the world? Was she to be deserted in her hour of trial? Oh, oh, oh, she could not bear it! She could not bear it!

Fozo'o ran to the Palaver house, though all the men had finished talking. They had said his mother should take the poison bean just as the sun came up next morning. It was all decided. There was no more to say. Besides, they all had head-aches from last night.

By-and-by all the town slept except those who watched Evindi. Fozo'o waited and waited. Then he took the drum from the Palaver house and hung it around his neck, and ran out into the forest. He climbed a tree. He began to beat the Carrier's drum. At night there are always Carriers upon the forest trails and they call to one another. Who was to know that little Fozo'o was not one of these? He called a drum name, it is true.

"Elephant Killer! Elephant Killer!" the drum called. There was no man with the drum name of Elephant Killer in that village. Whom did he call? Only Evindi, lying alone in the dark beside her watchers, understood. Only to Fozo'o had she told of "Elephant Killer," her horrid brother! Would her brother hear the little boy's drum? Would he understand? Would he come? And if he came, would he save her? All night Fozo'o drummed from his tree, "Come Elephant Killer! Come Elephant Killer! Save your sister! Come

before day or you cannot save your sister! Come, Elephant Killer! Come!"

Was Elephant Killer awake? Would he hear? Was he in his village, even, or had he gone on the warpath, maybe? Was he, perhaps, even dead himself? Oh, drum! drum! drum! All night, drum! drum! drum!

It was almost daybreak. Already the Chief was stirring. The village made little noises of waking. Evindi, whom the Chief's other wives liked very little, and whose favourite wife did not like at all, was to take the poison bean this exciting morning! No wonder everybody was up early. But suddenly the favourite wife stopped to listen. She was Evindi's sister, remember. She had not forgotten the drum name of Evindi's brother.

"Listen!" she said to the Chief. "Who is drumming?" He listened, and it seemed to him that the air was full of the sound: "Elephant Killer, Come! Elephant Killer, Come!"

"The drum name of my brother," said the favourite wife.

Of course that meant that the Chief should prepare the poison bean and make Evindi drink it before her brother could get there and stop things.

"Elephant Killer, come! Elephant Killer, come!"

The cup of poison was ready!

"Elephant Killer, come! Elephant Killer, come!"

They held it to Evindi's lip.

"Elephant Killer—— Elephant Killer——." The sun was up! It broke through the trees with a glint of red, and a great noise. A rush! A roar! A scream as the cup fell untasted from Evindi's poor lips. The Elephant Killer had come indeed! He rushed in with the first of the sunlight through the trees to fetch Evindi home.

AFRICA

IV

The Soul-Trinket of Maryia

THE gossips of the village said certainly that Maryia meant to kill the little Mohammedan tailor, because he wanted to take away her soul.

Now this was unreasonable of Maryia, the heathen, the African! Who ever had told Maryia that she might ever expect to be invited to enjoy any sort of Heaven? Who? Perhaps the village had whispered night-times of the shadow of one's self, the thing none could see, yet which was more one's self than one's ribs! But who knew? Certainly not the village, which kept its day-eyes glued to the things of eating, of selling women, and of war!

Maryia was a huge person, with immense hands. She dressed her hair with red clay and grease when she wanted to look beautiful. And how any woman who rubs clay and grease in her hair as an act of beauty, can think she has a soul, is beyond me. But how a woman who quarrels with her neighbours, and especially with a neighbour lady

like Kumbundu, and finds fault with the very way the leaves hang on the trees, and then wants to live forever—well, I lay that to the contrariness of woman.

I do not suppose Maryia regarded her soul as more than a trinket. Yet if it were only that, she treasured it, as I have seen a woman treasure a thin wire bracelet with a little ten-cent bangle upon it. And the little Mohammedan tailor dared try to take it away from her! He deliberately closed the narrow doors of his doctrine upon her. A woman, he said, had no soul. He held the door of his faith open only wide enough for the men to squeeze through.

He had come to the village, little Mustafa the tailor, riding a salted horse, his stout cart with its four-mule team carrying his sewing-machine behind him. Nobody had asked him to come or ever had seen him before. But everybody knew at once, that because he was a Mohammedan, he was a person of special importance, and privileged with the English government. Therefore a person to be feared! A person who could get you thrown into jail upon the sketchiest of excuses, such as—because you went to the school of a missionary!—or somebody thought you did—or said some day you might! For some wise reason known only to the heart of the English government, all Mohammedans in Africa find special favour!

Therefore, when Mustafa rode into the village, in

his gown of white lawn gathered full from his shoulders to his ankles, everybody but Maryia was much concerned. To gain his favour, they immediately set to work to build him a house. Maryia, however, refused to help. Though her two hands, when she put them together, were almost the size of a roof, she would not help! She only stood and glared at Mustafa.

She hated him intensely and at once. She did not know why. But as she had a frightful disposition and was liable to hate the most delightful things at a moment's notice, this did not count against Mustafa for a moment. His face was of the most interesting shade of tan, and made as stylish a contrast to the people of Maryia's village as sand-coloured cuffs make on a chocolate sweater. Maryia, however, loathed his colour, and her face lighted up into such a horrid brilliance that Mustafa at once noticed her. He saw her great hands, as she glared at him, those hands with which she planted *mealies* in the field, jerk open and shut, open and shut, as though she were trying to strangle something. Mustafa's face grew paler than ever. One might have thought he was afraid of Maryia.

They settled Mustafa's sewing-machine in his house, and then crowded about his door to see him sew. Even Maryia followed the other women to see the strange machine which chewed thread and

purred up and down a piece of cloth, biting little stitches into it faster than a lion runs!

While Mustafa sewed he talked to the women. He had a beautiful voice, the kind that tickles up and down your spine and makes you chilly. Mustafa's voice would have been in much demand at Camp Meetings if he had been a Methodist. As, unfortunately, he was not a Methodist, he made the best of things, and introduced God to the women by the name of Allah! He talked Allah to the women every day with his beautiful voice, Allah, the only God, and Mohammed, his prophet! This was stingy doctrine after the multitude of idols and spirits an African may conjure with. But there was nothing stingy about the prayers Mustafa had to say to this Being. At the most surprising hours Mustafa had to drop his stitching and massage his face, his hands, his arms and legs, stroke after stroke with water. This was a beginning of the things of his prayers. Followed calisthenic bowings to the sun rising. Followed the obeisance of his voice to the great silence which they say is the voice of God!

So you can see with what superhuman industry Mustafa had to devote himself to his sewing-machine in the off hours of his prayers to get anything done. Probably he was related to one of those wiry, whirling dervishes, who take a reckless delight in naming the ninety-nine names of Allah while dancing a spin-tail dance!

However, Mustafa for all his busyness, was an obliging person. He sewed the women's strips of cloth together for them. He asked them to let him! And if the son of one of them wished to come to him and learn the Koran, that boy was sure of English favour, maybe a job in the city! Who could tell? The women of the village began to see that it meant everything to their sons to learn the Koran-book of Mustafa. And if, when the little tailor stitched long seams for the women on his sewing-machine, what if he stitched their souls away?

Maryia had a son. He was big. He was beautiful. He was twelve years old, but he looked fifteen. But Maryia's neighbour-lady, Kumbundu, whom she hated, also had a son. He was big and also beautiful, and he was eleven. But he looked at least fourteen-and-a-half! When these two boys went on the elephant hunt together there was always a fury between them as to which should first draw blood from the elephant. In the hunt it is law that the boy who first draws blood owns the elephant. The man who kills it only gets the hind leg. When these two boys cured skins, there was always a fierceness and striving about it. When these two boys took wire and melted it and made little hammered and punched brass bowls, great was their rivalry; and when they sat apart to embroider (girls never embroider in Africa, boys only, or men) there was the wildest competition

from the first needle to the last. Maryia's friends said that certainly her son was the wisest in the things of hunting and skilled hand work, and Kumbundu's friends said exactly the same of her son.

The coming of the sewing-machine man changed all this. Would Maryia allow her son to learn the things of the Koran? Would Kumbundu allow hers?

Kumbundu would and did. It would make a fine man of her son, and what did she care for her soul? Her village idols did not receive women kindly, and the unseen spirits required too much time. You must do this and you must do that to unbind evil spells. This new religion was more restful. It put a big Allah into the sky like a sun. It put a big Mohammed into the sky like a moon. It gave your son position in life. He became like a star—a thing above! What mother could resist?

But Maryia, perhaps because instinctively she fought all things in life, fought also against this. "I do not believe this crooked little man's Allah!" she said bitterly. "How can he know so much—a little tailor, not forty years old? Has he lived in the old days and talked with this Allah? Has he ever laid eye on that Mohammed, even? How, then, is he so sure?"

"He has the book, Maryia!" said her awed neighbours, "the words of the book which fell from heaven, and which Mohammed, the Prophet, opened his ears to hear!"

Maryia was unconvinced at this, but a little uneasy.

"Come here, Kamba," said the mother, Kambundu, with a proud, showy smile, which made Maryia hate her more than ever. "Come here, my son, and speak the things of the Koran the little sewing-machine man has taught you!"

Kamba was not displeased to shine even in that small local matter. "'In the name of the merciful and compassionate God,'" he recited, "'Say, O, ye misbelievers! I do not serve what ye serve; nor will ye serve what I serve; nor will I serve what ye serve; nor will ye serve what I serve; ye have your religion, and I have my religion!'"

"Hear that!" said Kambundu.

"I hear nothing," said Maryia, the hateful one, "only a little rat-tat-tat of words which means nothing!" But although she would rather have died than admit it, the words came into her ears again and again of nights, with their queer rhythm. They lay like a snare in her thoughts, to snare her soul away. Yet even then, she would not allow her son, who was growing big and strong and wise in the things of his village, to know one word of the Koran.

It happened that in the hunting season an Englishman came to the village. He spoke much with the little tailor, and he went out on hunts when the boys went. Now in three of these hunts the son of Maryia drew blood from an elephant, the first of

the boys, and it was not counted to him, but to Kamba. This made the son of Maryia exceedingly angry, and when he came home from the hunt he told his mother.

"Why do you tell me?" Maryia stormed. "Am I to blame?" And her son stormed back, "Why did you not let me learn of Mustafa, like Kamba and the other boys?" And his mother answered back, "What has that to do with killing elephants?"

Then said Maryia's son, "It is told that Kamba is to go away with this Englishman, and earn shillings every week. Kamba is younger than I! And I must stay here and earn nothing!"

"Is that because he learns the little words in the tailor's book?" Maryia demanded. "Yes," said her son. "So says everyone!"

Maryia sat down. She was trembling. She never had been so angry before. Her great hands pawed the earth where she sat. A chicken came by, and she caught and wrung its neck in a way quite horrible to see. But she did not know it. Her ears, her eyes, her senses, were closed to all sounds except the warring in her heart. It went on, not for hours, but for days, this war between her love of her boy and her love of her soul. She did strange things, not knowing she did them, until the neighbours became afraid and said a demon possessed her. She carried a knife at her belt. She rolled her eyes when any spoke with her. And at

all times she mumbled the name of Mustafa the little tailor.

Kumbundu, her neighbour, kept close watch of Maryia, and others warned Mustafa. The little tailor never had forgotten how Maryia's hands had jerked open and shut, open and shut, when she first saw him. Suppose some night she should come and take his little neck in her great hands? He grew so nervous that he asked the chief to let him have a guard of men to watch his house at night. But of course Maryia did not know this.

One night blacker than her thoughts, she crept out of her house alone. Nothing moved, only the stars above, and Maryia on her hands and knees. The eyes of men do not shine in the dark, or Maryia would have seen many of them staring at her. She came to the little grass house of the tailor. She felt for the opening of the door. She could not tell whether the wind was rustling in her ears, or her own breathing. "Mustafa," she called in a little whisper. There was a movement within. There was a movement without. "Mustafa," she breathed again, "it is only Maryia, of the women, who would speak with you!" Again there was a movement from within, and a voice said, "Speak, but come no closer!"

"Master," said Maryia, "it is of my son, I speak. Good little tailor, will you tell me the words of the Koran, that I may teach them to my son?" "Send him to me," said the voice within.

"Good little tailor, do not ask that. The village would laugh at Maryia, who said he never should learn the words of the Koran. Come to the door, I pray, and teach me the words he must know and I will go back and say them to him!"

Maryia had made her supreme sacrifice. She breathed fast and hard. She made as if to creep through the door.

"Hay-a-a! Hay-a-a!"

At that shout from behind her, Maryia felt herself caught and bound. A dozen men shielded the little tailor from her.

That was all the village ever saw of Maryia. It was whispered that Maryia was a witch. That this had been proved. That she had been about to change the little tailor into a lion, and had carried a knife at her belt to skin him with! Yes, truly! Where she disappeared to, and how, is only for witches to hear. But it is certain that her son now learns the Koran every day, and will yet, it is said, be a greater man than Kamba! Which should pay Maryia for losing her soul, since after all it was to her no more than a trinket!

INDIA

V

The Littlest Tag-End Widow

WHEN Kyambu was nine years old, his uncle gave him a present,—a big present, eighteen presents all in one! It wasn't an electric train and it wasn't a radio set or a pony! It wasn't anything your uncle would give you when you were nine years old. No indeed!

It was something which would cost a lot to feed —and it was alive, oh, I guess you'd think so to hear its voice! In fact it had eighteen voices, and thirty-six eyes and thirty-six ears—— No! it wasn't a menagerie. It was—WIVES!

Kyambu was exactly nine years old when his uncle gave him eighteen wives. They consisted of the uncle's six aunts, eight sisters, and four daughters! The oldest aunt was fifty-one-or-two, and the youngest daughter was three months old and howled dreadfully.

The old aunt hobbled in to the wedding and the baby was brought in on a brass platter. Certainly Kyambu's uncle had cleaned house pretty thoroughly, but they do things like that in India and never think a thing about it.

Kyambu looked his wives over after the ceremony, but none of them interested him, so he went away and left them. He went out into the mango grove. And although the weather was undeniably tropic, Kyambu shivered. Most any man shivers, they say, when he marries only one wife, but poor Kyambu, with all that collection, shivered for a very different reason. Through the fragrance of the trees he could see the sun shining queerly. It seemed to waver back and forth. Now it was close above him, and oh, how hot and dry he felt! Now it had swung far out of reach, and now how miserably cold he was! If only Kyambu could have exchanged his wives for a real mother, who would have picked him up and put him to bed,—or if one of the eighteen wives had just put an ice-bag on his head and rubbed his little body with alcohol and then filled the hot-water bottle and called the doctor, things would probably have turned out more cheerfully. But Kyambu was only a very sick little boy with a horrid old uncle and those eighteen wives and lots of money. Perhaps Kyambu's uncle had guessed how sick his little nephew was going to be and had hurried up the wedding on that account. Certain it is that Kyambu should have been put to bed long before he was. He grew sicker and sicker. His new wives turned pale on their own account when they heard how sick Kyambu was. Oh, you can't guess what it means to be a widow in India! Nobody sends you little

notes saying how sorry they are; nobody sends you roses; nobody comes and takes you by the hand for comfort. Oh, never!

Kyambu's eighteen wives were huddling around, waiting for news, and looking very dismal, when Moothi, the three-months-old bride, began to howl. Moothi had the colic, but the seventeen other wives took her howling for a very bad sign, and they were not disappointed. Kyambu had died.

All the relatives trooped in. They snatched off the brides' necklaces and earrings and anklets. They cut off their long widow hair. They took off their soft garments and gave them horrid scratchy old clothes to wear. And Moothi howled and howled. They did not give her any peppermint for the poor little ache in her tummy. *She* was a widow!

Kyambu had died, don't you understand, and his wives were to blame. They hadn't poisoned him on the sly. I don't mean that. Probably they never had seen him until they were introduced on their wedding day. But in India they believe that one lives his life over and over again. And in one of those other lives Kyambu's eighteen wives must have done some dreadful sin! Now those eighteen dreadful sins had banded together, like the mean old things sins are, and laid for Kyambu and knocked him cold! Really, in India they believe things like that.

There was only one thing for those eighteen

widows to do. They must go on pilgrimages. If they ever expected to have any peace, they must travel from one temple to another, pray to this idol, and that idol. Give the priests lots of money and melted butter—and then, maybe in fifty or sixty years they could expect a little peace. No real happiness. How could eighteen such horrible creatures ever expect happiness?

Well, they didn't expect happiness, and the fifty-one-year-old-aunt-bride, what from twinges of rheumatism, and sleeplessness over trying to think what horrible sin she ever could have committed, fell in the well, or jumped in, or something, and there were only seventeen brides to begin the pilgrimage. Of course there was one bright spot to the affair. Kyambu had had so much money that his widows could really offer a lot more money and melted butter to each idol. Why idols like butter is beyond me—but it seems to oil up one's prayers somehow, and get more of them said, and probably buy a body peace ten or fifteen years quicker. But even then it would take years—oh, such long, hot, far-from-home, dreary years.

There was some question about taking Moothi along. Three-months-old *brides* usually are supposed to prefer to stay at home. Here, however, was a wicked three-months-old *widow,* so it was decided to have her nurse bring Moothi along.

There were plenty of servants. That helped. But here were shrines where one must crawl on

one's knees. There were the waters of the sacred Ganges where one must bathe. Moothi did not approve of the trip. And Moothi's nurse detested the trip. Especially when Moothi began to teethe, did everything go horribly. It was hot weather—for India, which means it was perfectly blazing. There was so much dust, and so many flies,—and poor Moothi, who now had nine teeth and was trying her best to get a tenth, wailed and wailed and wailed. She wailed all day and she wailed all night, and Moothi's nurse couldn't get any sleep, and the sixteen grown-up widows couldn't get any night, and Moothi's nurse couldn't get any sleep, Everybody was getting thin and nervous. Everybody scolded. Everybody was so unhappy. And then——

Well, this is how it happened. They were a long procession, seventeen widows and their servants. Moothi, being the tag-end widow, came last in line with her nurse. They were headed for a very sacred shrine, and Moothi had stopped crying for a while and fallen into a troubled sleep. They were passing through a poor little village, where children played in the street and heaped dust together and pulled it apart again.

Moothi's nurse lagged further and further behind the procession. Nobody turned to look after her. Then she took off all Moothi's clothes. She rubbed a little dirt into Moothi's hair and face, and laid Moothi-baby down in the sun!

Moothi woke up, but her nurse and everybody else were gone! She howled a little, and kicked her legs a little, and then lay still awhile blinking about her. By-and-by the sixteen widows and the servants came back, searching for her and her nurse. But Moothi was very dirty now and did not cry. So they passed by and missed her, and Moothi was left alone in the strange little village.

I really think that was nice, considering. Moothi did not know she was a widow, and there was no inconvenient person around to "tell on her!" Moothi was a baby again! Of course she was only a girl, and girls are not much consequence in India. But even so, when Moothi began to mourn over her tenth tooth again, one of the village women came and picked her up and took her home and tended her. So the Littlest Tag-End Widow now had a mother! Oh, perhaps not a pretty mother like yours. Perhaps a mother who never had marcelled her hair even, or brushed her teeth! But at least mother enough to find a little room in her heart for baby Moothi,—without which, I am very sure the world would have resolved itself into a decimal point, and Moothi into a zero, and her life into a wee minus sign!

VI

Ayesha Solves Her A, B, C

ALTHOUGH Ayesha Manogian had not been born in the bottom of a perfume bottle, she was recognized as a person who had no soul. Her intimates, in their Syrian tongue, called her a Terror, and the awfulness of her was preached even to Ain Tyleas. However, she was grown-up now, at least for Syria, where girls sometimes marry at eight, are passé at eighteen and almost grandmothers at twenty-eight; and having passed the ripe age of eleven, Ayesha already had been married three years, widowed three months, and fallen heir to three step-sons!

Three seemed Ayesha's sinister number. As to her step-sons, each of them bore a long and tiresome name such as Mohammed might have worn with dignity and delight. But since they figured in Ayesha's life like three unknown quantities which it seemed must be solved, let them be known as A, B and C. They can then be stated somewhat in the manner of an example in Third Grade arithmetic.

If A has two little uglinesses, an ugly face and an ugly tongue; and if B has three good-sized sins, lying, stealing and swearing; if C has four very bad habits, running away, tattling, breaking things and refusing to say his prayers, How much peace has Ayesha?

A, B and C were four, six and eight years old, but as far as attempting to love, honour and obey Ayesha Manogian, they might have been forty-four, sixty-six, and eighty-eight! They paid no attention to anything she told them, or rather they paid so startling and accurate an attention, that they immediately went and did just the reverse of what she commanded. If they had been sired by Nero, they could not have acted much worse.

Ayesha's corrective methods were prompt, if not conservative. When A told her she was the equivalent of the "Cat's Whiskers," when she told him to lug home firewood, she bit his hand until it bled. When B sold the family goat to a leper by mistake, not being able to take money from a leper, which B noticed too late, Ayesha spared neither the rod nor B's anatomy. Solomon would have held his breath to see her demonstrate this proverb. But when C neglected to say his prayers,—and saying one's prayers included first washing the face, hands, arms, feet and legs; learning which side of the face to wash first, and which side of the hand and foot; remembering whether the arm should be stroked from the wrist to the elbow or from the elbow to

the wrist,—well, when C neglected his prayers, Ayesha bit him in the cheek.

C's howl drew the neighbours. A stepmother! Whispers, then open words flew about, and the end of it was that A, B and C were suddenly taken away from Ayesha and sent to the Ain Tyleas orphanage.

Ayesha was glad, and she remained glad three days. Although she had not been born in the bottom of a perfume bottle, she knew she was a person without a soul. But after three days, probably after she was a little rested from the emotional strain of those three riotously bad boys, she began to remember C's face when she bit him, and she wondered for an instant if boyish vengeances ever amounted to anything.

She had little time to worry over this, however, for one of her brothers who had departed to America, U. S. A., or the bright, beautiful, scintillating "Usa," as Ayesha called it, had just written, urging her to follow him to the land of the free and the home of the immigrant.

Ayesha's face brightened into horrid brilliance as she thought of this wonderful adventure. She would go so far away from A, B and C that they could never find her—even if they never forgot—even if some day they tried to pay her back!

She did her packing hurriedly, in a sort of strange fever, troubled by her own high-forced gaiety. But through it all she was troubled by a

strange question. Should she go and bid A, B and C good-by, before she left Syria forever? She hated to!

"Shall I go? or, Shall I not go?" she debated in that strange, anxious uneasiness which she began to view with alarm. "At the orphanage, if they knew I was the one who bit C's cheek, they would certainly cast me out without even seeing him!" She licked her lips.

However, she went. She arrived at the orphanage just three hours before time for her train. Three hours! The boys, she was told, were bathing with the other children, down at the Mediterranean. Would she wait until they came back?

No, Ayesha had no time to wait. She heaved a sigh of relief. She had really tried to say "good-by," but Fate had spared her. She hastened out of the door, down the road a little way. The waters of the great blue sea lay underneath, and she quivered a moment, then turned uneasily and started away. Poor little eleven-year-old Ayesha, who hardly knew how to swim, who hardly knew childhood—she gave a childish sigh and turned again to the fragrance of the wide waters. Such beautiful, sparkling waters! How each ripple sang and danced! It was as if God was glad—as if God danced! And how the little boys and girls shouted and splashed—shouted and splashed—to see God dance!

Only three hours, but perhaps she could catch a

minute to go a little closer to those beautiful waters! Perhaps she should catch sight of A, B and C too, and wave them good-by, without their knowing it was she. Then certainly they would wave back. She thought she could go undisturbed on her long journey, if only A, B and C waved to her, even if they did not know it was she! Perhaps, if they had such joy as this each day, they already had forgotten her great unkindness. Somehow she began to feel that she never could really leave until they smiled at her!

With that last strange notion she ran down toward the shore, looked closely into the faces of all the boys and girls, asking over and over for four-year-old A, six-year-old B and eight-year-old C. Everybody seemed far too busy, too merry to answer her. She ran on.

At last she saw them, yes, away out beyond all the other children, clinging to their safety ropes, three such tiny dots. At home they had looked so big! Bad little fellows, how close they had gone to the whirlpool! Were they not afraid of that horrid maelstrom? Bad, foolish little fellows! She called to them in her high scolding voice she used at home, "Come in shore—bad little pigs—C—O—M—E at once!"

They did not hear her.

No other children were near them. A, B and C seemed to be strangers! She raised her shrill voice, "*Pigs!* B—A—D L—I—T—T—L—E

P—I—G—S!" she cried. They turned. They saw her. They considered her venomously from that distance, seemed to ask each other what she was there for. Whether she might have come to carry them home.

"C—O—M—E I—N S—H—O—R—E!" she cried.

With that they turned from her in their prompt and awful disobedience, waded deeper, beyond the safety ropes, beyond A's four-year-old depth, B's six-year-old depth, C's eight-year-old depth, poor little A, B and C, who did not know how to swim!

Ayesha Manogian hardly knew how to swim herself! But, oh, there was nobody else close by! She waded. She stumbled. She came up against a great rock. She got to the reach of the maelstrom, with its high scolding voice! Three little boys—three hours—— She sucked in a terrible breath and struck out. The strange notion took her that she was somebody else, and the high, scolding-voiced-maelstrom was she—was Ayesha Manogian, who had hidden her three step-sons behind her cruel apron of water! So she battled with this savage, stubborn, frightful self, somehow found herself more savage, more stubborn, more frightful than the maelstrom.

One by one she found the three little boys, dragged them up, and laid them on the rock. Then with all that was left of her, she gave one supreme

lift to herself, and crawled up the rock beside them.

Dumbly she lay there, close to their breathing little bodies, and closed her eyes. Strange agonies ministered to her. Chills, like long shadows pressed against her, chills as of evening when great olive hills rose up and hid the sun, and reefs of thin gray cloud, like drifting smoke from a sacrifice, grew denser—Sacrifice!—Alone before its glory she lay, a broken penitent, peering from defeated, sightless eyes upon the radiance she could not see.

Slowly that brightness darkened into twilight. Little lights as of aimless fireflies, as of quaint glowworms, spun zigzag paths of colour for a multitude of strange shadowy wings. Then one glare of brilliance tore through those last shadows and all was night.

When the life-boat reached the rock, poor little A, B and C were trying to wake up their eleven-year-old Ayesha. They did not know that at last she had solved the problem of A's ugliness, B's sins and C's disobedience, and had given her life for that answer.

VII

Uncle Ourig Plays Ghost

I AM sure I have said "Malaga raisins are very good raisins, but the raisins of Smyrna are better," about forty million times. And every time I said it I wished I was a little Smyrna girl, so that I could go out and pick a box of raisins right off the tree every time I wanted one!

Of course I'm big enough now to know that raisins don't grow in boxes, like I used to think they did, and I've often wondered why somebody hasn't called Mr. Hoover's attention (Mr. Burbank's, I *mean*), to that unhandy fact. Wouldn't they look cute, don't you think, thirty little raisins shuffling around in a pretty pink Burbanked pod?

Well, anyway, this story isn't about raisins, but about Zabel who was almost ten, and her wise old grandmother who was almost a hundred (at least she looked a hundred), and about Uncle Ourig, who was just about thirty. I don't know whether he was uncle to Zabel, or uncle to her grandmother, because they both called him "Uncle," but anyway he was a nice young man, oh, a whiz of a chap!

They all lived in Smyrna when they were at home. Uncle Ourig had business off in Algiers now and then, and Algiers, if you know your geography, is up in Africa, while Smyrna is down in Turkey. The funny part of it is that in Algiers you'd expect to see Africans, and in Smyrna Turks, wouldn't you? But it is just like a family that takes boarders. Boarders live in your house, but they don't belong to you, and as to belonging to Turkey, Smyrna would rather fly! It belonged to Greece, last time I dared look at a geography.

Anyway Uncle Ourig went down to Algiers on business not very long ago, and being a musical person, he stuck his oboe into his bag. An oboe is sort of a flute that you blow on and tickle with your fingers, and Uncle Ourig could make the most stunning music on his oboe you ever wanted to hear. Most everybody in Smyrna said so. In fact Uncle Ourig never missed playing on his oboe at night, no matter where he was. If he was glad he played, and if he was sad he played, and you would want to dance all around him or sob tears all over him, according to the way he played.

Well, the first night he was in Algiers an old Arab,—(I *told* you it wouldn't be an African, didn't I?),—an old Arab sat on a mat and began to play on an oboe. Only it was horn-shaped and was called a zourna. The old Arab was fat and full of funny floppy clothes, so that he really looked like a dressed-up pig doing a stunt in the circus.

Uncle Ourig did not notice, for he was so busy listening. On and on and on the Arab wailed and flourished and trilled and intoned through his zourna. Uncle Ourig never had heard any music like *that* before, so finally he got out a pencil and jotted down the notes on a paper. When he got back to his ship (I think he slept on a ship), he played the music over and over on his oboe, just as he had heard the Arab play it, until he remembered it.

The next afternoon Uncle Ourig went again to the cafe, and there sat the same old Arab playing the same old tune. Uncle Ourig had brought his oboe along with him this time, and when the Arab stopped to rest, Uncle Ourig put his oboe together and began to play the Arab's song for him!

My goodness, *how* Uncle Ourig played! Little trills and wailing clusters of sound, like little clusters of grapes hanging to a long, long vine. The old Arab listened and listened, very shocked and very surprised, like a little boy who hears a strange *djinn* piping. Perhaps he thought Uncle Ourig was a sort of fairy or something, for just as soon as Uncle Ourig got through, the old Arab got up and carefully inspected him all over, and then told him what a wonderful thing he had done. It seems he had performed a miracle, Uncle Ourig had! Why, he had played a canticle of Islam which no man may learn without years of practicing, oh, ten hours a day for forty years or so! And certainly

no low-down, ignorant Armenian (he stuck his nose up at Uncle Ourig) could learn it anyhow—not if he practiced twenty hours a day for a trillion years!

Of course Uncle Ourig thought that was a pretty rich joke, and when he got home he told it to Zabel and her grandmother, and how they laughed, when he played that Arab song to them. Then he forgot all about it. He had plenty else on hand, I should think, for the Greeks and the Turks began to fight, and the Greeks bombarded the city of Smyrna, and there you are! Or there Zabel and grandmother and Uncle Ourig were. A pretty tough spot with all the houses on fire, and nothing to eat, and the guns, the terrible guns, killing everybody. And then, when nobody alive had any home to go to, it began to rain! All Zabel's grandmother had saved was a little basket of lunch (*don't* grandmothers know?), and all Zabel had saved was her pet kitten, and all Uncle Ourig had saved was his oboe.

They rushed out of the city, so terrible behind them, like a roaring furnace, like a roaring giant, a red Allah that called in great hoarse gusts of laughter to the Prophet. And the rain beat down upon them like a whip, whipping them into the dust of the road. Zabel's legs began to ache until she thought she could not take another step, and her kitten cried, and grandmother's face grew gray and grayer, but still they went on. Uncle Ourig put

an arm around each of them, and again and again he said, "We shall come to a village soon. There you may rest."

Pretty soon they did come near a village. It was getting dark and the rain had stopped, but in the awful smacking blows of the cannon behind them, sounds which seemed to leave great holes in the air, they did not notice the strange new sound in front of them. Uncle Ourig heard it first, for he had been urging them forward, and now he pulled them up so short that they nearly fell flat. Zabel's grandmother put out one hand as if to push away the cruel new noise, clasped the other tightly around Zabel and her kitty, then toppled over soundlessly and lay still.

Uncle Ourig bent over grandmother, so quiet in all that noise, her face, now that her eyes were closed, so sad—so strange and sad. Zabel never had noticed before how sad a face her grandmother had. Grandmother smiled so much—when she was awake!

Uncle Ourig began to tear handfuls of grass and weeds to cover grandmother from sight, and Zabel helped him. Then Uncle Ourig hid Zabel and her kitty in beside grandmother and went a little way off to find water. Zabel suddenly felt so alone, so far from any help, there so close beside grandmother, there so deep in the noise. And then Zabel heard the *new* noise! It was close, oh, so close!

A frightful shriek, and another sound, and she *knew!* It was the *Turkish soldiers!*

Now I suppose I've got to explain to you how a Turkish soldier is different from our own dear Sammies. Suppose you had a lollypop in one hand and a Christian in the other hand, and you told a Turkish soldier to take his choice, have the lollypop or kill the Christian—why, even if it was a big red five-cent lollypop and a knock-kneed, pigeon-toed Christian, he'd choose the Christian. It wouldn't have to be a go-to-church and prayer-meeting Christian either. This Christian might swear and tear and bite and everything, but just so long as he wasn't a Turk, he *must* be a Christian! And the more Christians a Turk kills, the higher to heaven he goes, to hear *him* tell it! So you can see why grandmother fainted when she heard the noise of the Turkish soldiers, and why Uncle Ourig covered her and Zabel with grass, and what Zabel had to expect if the soldiers found her!

Zabel squeezed her strange eyes shut, and said a pitiful little prayer, "Oh, Father-Jesus, *save* us!" but all the while she was listening to the horrible noise. Why *didn't* Uncle Ourig come back? Had they caught him? Oh, somebody close—Oh!

Zabel gave a wild shriek and shut her eyes tighter. Somebody had her by the shoulder, shook her roughly. She looked—Uncle Ourig! "Sh—H!" he hissed so savagely that Zabel stared. In fact, he had bent down so suddenly that all the pre-

cious water he had brought for grandmother spilled away.

Now that Zabel really looked at him, Uncle Ourig looked as frightened as she felt. It is bad enough to be frightened yourself. But when the only person you own, who is safe and strong, gets frightened too, how *do* you feel?

"*Uncle* Ourig!" Zabel cried out loud in alarm, not knowing what she did, for Uncle Ourig had pulled out his oboe!

Was he crazy? Perfectly raving crazy, with Turkish soldiers killing Christians not twenty feet away, and just craving and looking for more, and Uncle Ourig to think of putting his oboe together.

"Uncle *Ourig!*" Zabel gasped, and at that he shook her good and hard and said "Sh—H!" as though he would like to choke her, and put his oboe together some *more!* Why if he played one note the soldiers would hear him. They would come and butcher him and grandmother and Zabel just like nothing, and much obliged to him for the chance!

"*Uncle Ourig!*" Zabel stuffed her fingers into her ears, and her kitty, who had been clutched a good deal and cried over a good deal, took one jump, and ran away! Grandmother stirred. And Uncle Ourig started to play!

Oh, I cannot explain to you the way Uncle Ourig played, but it was as if a wild fairy had taken hold of him, as if he were a *djinn* on fire, the music curling around him like wisps of smoke. He blew

so hard that his fingers looked as if they were continually blown out of the stops! It was as if he blew a vine of sound from earth to heaven, a strange, thin high tone, hung with clusters of sound. Behind him the city roared and blasphemed, but suddenly at that strange Ismalic song, the noises in front of him stopped as if by a command.

What made the Turkish soldiers stop and run away? Did they think ghosts played, those wicked, terrible 'fraid-cats, when they heard the Arab canticle?—for they *ran away!*

The village silence continued. No more frightful shrieks came from the little houses.

How they got grandmother to her feet and brushed off and walking I don't know, but it is certain that the three of them stumbled forward again in the dark. Uncle Ourig never daring to stop his strange Arab tune a second. So they reached the village, the only little village left standing of all around; and trembling women tended grandmother and Zabel and Uncle Ourig, gave them supper and bed and home. But Zabel's kitten never came back.

VIII

The Utterlies

HERVIE was "little, but oh, my!" He had pep. He had steam. He had red blood and ambition. And he was ten. He was ten-and-a-half to be exact, and to be perfectly exact, he also had imagination.

Hervie, of course, hadn't an idea that it was imagination, when it roared its first tiny cub roar and lashed its diminutive tail. But he was delighted with it, and helped it roar and lash, until presently it was a big, overgrown imagination, with sharp, hungry teeth. And so when it ate him up and swallowed him whole, Hervie liked it.

But Hervie's family did not like it. No sir-ee!

"What's the matter with that kid, for pity's sake?" Hervie's father asked on a certain celebrated evening in that family. "And what's more, where is he?"

Hervie's mother, who had been trying to find her best society gold-monogrammed stationery to write a note on, said she didn't know just that instant. Hervie had been there to dinner, and hadn't

asked to go out or anything, so he must be around the house. But where on earth was her box of stationery?

"Huh!" said Hervie's father. "Where's my razor, and where's my suit?" Hervie's father belonged to the "Order of the Knights of the Orient," a secret organization which wore red fezzes and bolero jackets and things, on initiation nights. This was initiation night, and Hervie's father was Lone High Master of the Order, so it was imperative that he find his razor and his red fez and bolero jacket.

"Of course Hervie *might* have taken the razor," said Hervie's father, sloshing about in the bathroom, "and he *might* have taken the suit, and he *might* have taken your stationery, but he naturally wouldn't take them all at one time, would he?"

In answer, there was a frightful bump from the maid's room up on the third floor. As the maid was washing the dinner dishes downstairs, Hervie-Sire rushed up towards that sound, his suspenders draped about his hips, and found Hervie sitting dazedly in the maid's waste basket rubbing his head.

The gold-monogrammed stationery, the razor, a fountain pen (which had not been missed) and some burnt cork, were scattered over the top of the maid's chiffonier. The mirror to the chiffonier hung at a curious angle, having been jarred completely loose on one side. Now that Hervie's

father really took a straight look at the boy, he saw that Hervie's eyebrows had been curiously darkened and widened, and now met in a sinister sort of love-knot over his nose. His father's red fez lay on the floor, and the Lone High Master's bolero still clung to Hervie's shoulders.

Hervie had not waited to be questioned, but immediately explained that he had jacked himself up, upon the maid's chiffonier, in order to think. That suddenly a great thought had burst upon him, which so overpowered his sense of gravity that he skidded off his perch and landed in the waste basket.

This explanation, however, did not satisfy Hervie's Sire. Why should Hervie have to sit on top of the maid's chiffonier to think? And how about the wrecked mirror?

Hervie at this explained that he had been getting a "close up" of Kemal Pasha slicing Armenians, and taking it down in shorthand. He thought it ought to make a great scenario for the Famous Players-Lasky.

Hervie's father was not able to understand these technical terms, and Hervie had to resort to nursery words.

"I was jest pretending I was Kemal Pasha," said Hervie. "The one Uncle Zal writes about. I made me some nice Turkish eyebrows, and borrowed your suit."

"Yes," said his father.

"And I worked my moving-picture camera and——"

"Your moving-picture camera?" asked his father.

"Sure," said Hervie. "I pretended the looking-glass is the camera. You twirl it fast enough and things spin 'round, you bet! It's great, only none of the other bureau looking-glasses will do it. They stick. So I cranked my camera, and took four reels of Kemal murdering Armenians. Honest, I got so I could do it fine. Then I thought I'd take a close-up of Kemal for the fifth reel, like you have to, so I climbed on top of the chiffonier, and darned if the looking-glass didn't fly off one of its pins! It takes up a lot of room spinning around, and I have to sit on the edge anyway, but it kind of surprised me when it broke, and I fell off. Can't you get me a real movie camera, Dad? They don't cost much!"

"I'd be *likely* to," said Hervie's impossible father, who now hurriedly gathered his fez, bolero and razor, and made for downstairs.

"Why not?" Hervie inquired, indignantly, trailing after him. His father merely grunted. "Then I'll ask Uncle Zal," said Hervie. "He's right on the spot. I bet he'll send me one of the Pasha's old suits, even, and maybe a dead Armenian!" Then he brightened. Here was a beautiful idea. Uncle Zal had been appointed one of a commission to report on the Armenian situation.

He had talked with Kemal Pasha. He had walked and ridden the Armenian roads. Moreover, Uncle Zal was one of those delightful beings who had lots of sympathy and asked no inconvenient questions. It is to be presumed that Uncle Zal's imagination, if he had one, had been slammed into an iron cage and kept padlocked. But sometimes it peeked through the bars, as for instance when you told him you *needed* a moving-picture camera in your *tenth year.* Hervie was sure of the camera, and the other stage properties thrown in if he but wrote and asked for them.

"You see, Uncle Zal," he ended his letter, "it would be utterly impossible to convince Pop that I need one. But it's been a utter failure so far, trying to make money without one. You can see for yourself how utterly necessary it is to have tools to do good work, can't you, Uncle Zal? So now no more until I hear from you, only you know yourself there's millions in Moving Pictures, don't you? I mean millions of dollars, or hundreds anyway.

"Yours loving nephew,

"HERVIE."

Hervie had a hazy idea that Uncle Zal did not love the Turks any too madly. The comment Uncle Zal had made on the Turkish situation was written in these mild well-modulated words, "Turkey has acted rather as a kind of blight upon all the peoples she has conquered. As Ramsey—pos-

sibly too strongly—puts it, 'The action of the Turks in every department of life has simply been to ruin, never to rebuild.'"

Hervie was, then, utterly unprepared (I use the adverb advisedly) when Uncle Zal sailed into him with the following letter:

"Dear Herv (it began),

"You seem to have invented and patented that word 'utterly' and nailed it down. Why, my dear child, there isn't one soul in America who knows what the word 'utterly' means. Not unless they've been to Europe sometime in the past eight years and seen some of the deluge. I wish the moon were a piece of paper and I could write some of the 'utter' things upon it, for the world to read.

"I read in a short story some time ago that the heroine was 'utterly sad.' I said then, 'Oh, pish! Utter sadness would kill her!' Now that I've seen utter sadness, I know it kills the precious something we call life, without killing the body.

"There were five thousand women pushed out of their home town late last fall, when the Kemal Pasha began his house-cleaning. When they got to the town where they were sent, there were five hundred left. Puzzle: Where were the other forty-five hundred?

"Well, *we* came over the same road a short time later. We saw nothing but a dreary road. That was all the Pasha wanted us to see. Afterwards we saw the five hundred women. They were very

strangely blank of face. Thin, of course, and with no shine to their eyes. We asked them where the rest of the women were? 'On the road behind! You will find them on the road behind!' they repeated over and over. The shine had gone out of their voices, too. Do you understand what had happened?

"Now suppose you had seen your father and mother killed like one little boy who lay in the hospital. He had not smiled in months. Every day we tried to joke with him, to make him smile. His eyes were blank with that same blankness, and his voice was blank with that same blankness. He answered your questions as if he was very tired and wished you would go away and not ask him any more. Now, Hervie, there is nothing so unnatural as a child who does not smile. Utter sadness was the disease. It killed him.

"There was a baby, too, we picked up. Its hands and feet had been frozen, and had fallen off. Utter neglect. Then there was a boy of fifteen who had lost his parents when he was seven, and had wandered ever since. He was bent and old like a man of sixty. He looked as nearly fifteen as Methuselah! In fact I would not believe he was a boy at all until four weeks before he died. He said he wanted an orange. I gave him one. Shall I tell you what he said? 'I called you the Mister who loves me, when you took me in,' he whispered, 'but now do you mind if I call you "Father?"'

He smiled, and then I knew he was fifteen. That boy was utterly starved, mind, heart and body.

"I could tell you about the little Armenian grandmothers who had seen their sons and daughters tortured and swept away in the Pasha's terrible house-cleaning. And they still held on, and to this day keep their tiny grandchildren about them *and go on! Utterly brave!*

"America feeds most of these orphans. Do you know what they get for their supper? A cup of weak tea, with six raisins in it, and three and a half ounces of bread. Cut a slice of your mother's bread and see how much it weighs, Hervie. These orphans once got four and a half ounces of bread, but America, good old America, is so sick and tired of feeding orphans, orphans are such old stuff, that the bread had to be cut down. And there's just this to be said about food. It is just as hard on the digestion to eat too little as to eat too much. Meals are old stuff, too. But America eats hers every day.

"Now, my dear Youngster, I am coming to the real pith of my letter. Perhaps you understand why I have stayed on in the Near East. Perhaps you don't. But I want you to ask your father to sell those Acme Shear stocks of mine and send me the money as soon as possible. I am as ever,

"Your loving

"Uncle Zal."

"Gosh," said Hervie, and because the thing was

too big for him, could say no more. But he shivered as he handed the letter to his father. And he thought, "I'm glad he didn't insult me by thinking I'd want a camera, after *all that!*"

Hervie's father went five miles up into the air, when he came to the part about selling the Acme Shear stocks. "They're all the stocks Zal's got!" he roared. "He's crazy!"

"He's a—a utter sport!" said Hervie. That night when he looked out and saw the moon, white and round, it looked more than ever like a piece of paper, and he wondered how the word UTTERLY would look scrawled across it, for all the world to see.

The next day he got a newspaper route and came home to dinner very tired and draggled from selling papers. He stuck it out through winter sleet and snow, and the pennies stacked up.

"Going to get that moving-picture camera anyway, hey, kid?" his father asked Hervie one night with pardonable pride, and handed him a bill.

Hervie took it slowly. "Have I got to use this for a camera?" he asked. "Why, no," said his father, puzzled. "What you saving for?"

Hervie hated to tell. He knew his father would go ten miles into the air *this* time. "For the Utterlies," he said, and watched his father's face. It took some time to explain that he meant Uncle Zal's Armenians, the starved, sad, utterly Armenians.

SPAIN

IX

Zara and the Horrible Mantilla

ZARA wanted a mantilla just like big girls wear—a beautiful long black lace mantilla that would cover her pretty little Spanish head, and fall down around her arms—so! Oh, she wanted it, and wanted it, more than anything else in the world.

She had prayed for it before her favourite saint, and burned candles there, and last January, when the Three Kings passed by (those second cousins to Santa Claus), she had placed her little shoes on the balcony, hoping they would be full of a lace mantilla the next morning. But last January—wasn't it odd?—the Three Kings had not stopped to give her anything!

When Zara ran out in the morning her shoes had disappeared! Oh, where could they, *could* they be? Zara had hunted everywhere, now with great tears in her eyes, now with flushed cheeks, now shaking her head, her black eyes full of storm and anger. At last in her distress she ran to her brother, Pedro.

"Oh, Dios! Maria! Maria! They are gone!" she sobbed, and flung herself into Pedro's long, grown-up arms. Pedro happened to be Zara's father and mother and big brother all in one, and Zara was Pedro's complete family.

Pedro's face looked very queer while she was telling him. His pale thin cheeks turned white as plaster. Honestly, while she cried, Pedro got to looking just like you feel when somebody gives you a dose of castor oil. But the minute Zara looked up at him again his face changed, he frowned a little and his eyes stared inside at himself,—you know, the way you look when you are doing mental arithmetic.

Then he said, "Ah, Pedro is the bad old thing! Pedro forgot the Three Kings' coming! Pedro found somebody's little shoes thrown out on the balcony, and he thought he would bring them in and try them on and see if they would fit him!"

Zara laughed, then she cried harder. When Zara wanted anything, she forgot everything else in the world, and pretty often she talked and talked and cried about it, until Pedro got nightmares and fidgets and everything. It was that way this time, for pretty soon Zara talked and whined about the mantilla, until Pedro felt as if he ate black lace, and smelt black lace from morning to night.

That was in January when Pedro was thin in his cheeks and limpy in his leg. But Zara kept at him until he promised her that on St. John's day,

in July, when there is another holiday and giving of more presents, she should have her black lace mantilla.

Zara shivered with delight when he promised her. But now, she asked him, now that he was so lame and weak, could he buy it for her? Was he *sure* he wasn't teasing?

It was from that day that Pedro, with the face like old plaster and the queer twisted leg, got up mornings to do his Daily Dozen. Of course he did not have a phonograph and exercises like you have, but he put on his gay and beautiful toreador's suit and hobbled around his little room, just as if he were in a tiny arena fighting bulls! But oh, goodness, right at first any bull that hadn't had spring-halt and blind staggers could have caught Pedro, because Pedro's leg would begin to twist under him, and he would have to stop for that day; yes, and groan a little.

Zara loved Pedro in his toreador's suit. She told him so. It made her think of last year when he was a real toreador, and flew at bulls like a butterfly, and waved his teasingly gorgeous cloak in their eyes, over their heads and noses. And then, like a butterfly, danced away from them and flitted back again, and with his long white sword killed them! His sword with the cross in the hilt! But the last big, bad bull had not died on time, as he ought to! He was a sort of an old slow-poke, anyway, that bull. He didn't want to fight the horses

all stood up in a row before him, although the thousands and thousands of people all stood up and hissed and raged at him, screaming, "*Vacca! vacca! fuego! fuego! fuego!*" Although the *banderillero* men stuck winged darts into him! Darts that burst like firecrackers! Although the *chula* men flapped long maddening-coloured clothes under his nose! Nothing would he do, that bull, until Pedro, in his green and gold cloak, began to tease him. Then how he foamed in rage! How he lowered his head to dash Pedro to pieces! How he staggered under Pedro's lightning sword, and suddenly pitched forward at Pedro. And Pedro, his cloak somehow caught upon the cruel horns, suddenly staggered and fell with him—fell and twisted his leg! Ah, that old bull! Ah, Pedro!

This year, however, everything was going to be all right. Pedro's leg would be all untwisted by St. John's day. He would fight a new bull. He would get lots of *pesetas, reales, duros,* oh, lots of money. And then he would buy Zara her mantilla. Zara could think of nothing except her mantilla, all day and every day. When once she put it over her head—*oh* how different she would feel! How much better she could say her prayers then! Why! it would be like saying one's prayers in a lace cathedral! And so it was until St. John's day.

Zara was up with the sunlight that wonderful morning, for was not this the great day of the bull-fight, the day of the giving of gifts, the day Zara

was to receive her mantilla? She ran into Pedro's room to remind him of his promise, to tell him to be quite careful, for Pedro still limped a little. Pedro's bed was there, a thin little pallet that somehow looked to Zara strangely hot and rumpled and tossed. Pedro's room was there, a dark little cubby-hole in the wall, all stirred up and nervous looking, with Pedro's horrid old clothes all strewn about like limp Pedros, lying indolently here and there. Half a Pedro where his old waist lay, half another Pedro where his old breeches lay. Zara stared and stared.

"Where has he gone? Where?" she cried. "He would not go to the bull-fight this way? Walk off, and not leave Zara a ticket? Not let Zara see the bull-fight?" Perhaps he was hiding in the corner, where he kept his beautiful toreador's suit, just to tease Zara! The corner was empty! No Pedro! No Pedro!

How often Pedro had put on his toreador's suit and danced and shouted and sung about this tiny room! How often he had dodged imaginary bulls, teased them, advanced upon them, rushed aside, and then so splendidly thrown them! For an instant the room seemed full of Pedro and his bulls. A moment after Zara had run out of the room, out of the house, down the street, on and on. *Cara amor!* she must find Pedro!

Thousands and thousands of people were all about. Ticket sellers were crying, "*Al sol! A la*

sombra!" Bright red umbrellas were everywhere, bright faces, laughter, bottles of wine, peaches, dust, wilder laughter. Already the ring was surrounded by boys crazy to get in, hanging to the chance that maybe by-and-by, late in the afternoon, somebody would get sick and come away, and give them a ticket.

"Pedro! Pedro!" Zara cried, rushing toward a toreador's suit — Not Pedro! — Another! — Not Pedro! She could not see him, she could not find him anywhere about the great arena. At last a green and gold cloak—Pedro! She rushed into his arms! A toreador picked her up. "It is Pedro, then, you want?" he asked. His face took on a strange look. He carried her in through the vomitorium, into the great moon-dish-like arena, up steps, up and up and up. Then she was sitting alone, and the toreador had whispered in her ear, "Make a little prayer for Pedro!" and was gone.

Suddenly the great amphitheatre was all alive, everybody pushing, scrambling, climbing. Soldier suits, great umbrellas and twinkling fans bobbed up and down; gold and silver combs, velvet coats, jewels and ivory walking sticks seemed to climb of themselves! Squeezing past Zara, sitting beside her, Dons and Doñas came; eating, drinking, laughing, talking, pockets full of bread and peaches, arms full of lemonade and tortillas and sandwiches!

Poor Zara was so hungry, yet somehow she knew she could not eat!

On one side of Zara a funny old peasant with hemp sandals sat and talked to himself, his eyes glued to the arena. On her other side were two Senoritas, full of a perfume and laughter which later changed to ferocious cries if a bull lagged a second longer than they thought he ought, or anything amiss happened on the arena.

It was now four o'clock. Zara had been sitting there all day. But now the great trumpets blew, and out marched twenty men dressed like Solomon and the Queen of Sheba and the Midnight Follies! These twenty beautiful beings of feather hats and capes and scarfs, stopped before the mayor and asked permission in pantomime to begin the fight. Then out sprang the man with the key to the door where the bulls were kept. He pranced up on a gray horse, and was all dressed in black, and everybody cheered until he stopped to bow, when everybody hissed and stormed at him to hurry! He pranced away as fast as he could, and then the *picadores,* armed with long spikes, and riding the most wretched, terrible horses, trotted in, placed their steeds four in a row, and waited. Zara all this time was waiting for Pedro to come. She held her head high and proudly, waiting for Pedro. Then as she stared at the *picador* men, she started. Tears of anger sprang to her eyes. She looked harder. Yes! There sat Pedro, astride a horrible

old horse—Pedro—his face like white wax, his cheeks so thin, her Pedro!

A terrible sob came into her throat. She understood now. Knew why he had not left her her eight *reales* to buy a seat with, why he had not wanted her to see the bull-fight. Pedro was not a toreador any more!

She did not want to stay. But she was wedged in so tightly that she could not move, hardly breathe. The bulls leapt in, rushed at the twenty poor, defenceless, rickety old horses, horses who wore a bandage over one eye, and looked too funny for words. Zara held her breath. One horse down! A great tan-coloured bull flew at Pedro's horse, hurled him, Pedro and all, to the earth. People ate and drank, laughed in scorn at Zara's crying, dug their elbows into her ribs to make her hush, ate and drank, ate and drank.

Darkness spouted up before Zara's eyes. She could not see! Only that spouting darkness and somewhere beyond, Pedro, who had fallen. And there Zara had to sit for four hours more, with Pedro gone from the ring—Pedro, who had fallen! He was killed, she knew without telling. He could not save his fall with his poor twisted leg. Oh, it was Zara who had wanted him to fight—Zara who had thought he could fight bulls bigger than elephants with his poor twisted leg. And he had died, to buy her a mantilla!

"God go with you, Pedro! God go with you,

Pedro!" she sobbed, over and over, and somehow found that at last she had unloosened herself from the frightful arena, and was running away from it. It lay small and round behind her, far behind her, as she fled, like a brooch that she had unpinned and thrown away. The streets uncoiled themselves from her, and left her standing alone in a room, a dark little room, where stood Pedro's thin little bed. There was a bundle on the bed, a long, narrow bundle, done up to look like Pedro! But Zara knew it was not Pedro, not the Pedro who could smile at Zara, and tell her he had tried on her little shoes to see if they would fit!

She ran and got a candle. She lighted that candle. She held it shakily in those thin, kind fingers of Pedro's. The flicker of the candle seemed to change the look of Pedro's face. His eyelids seemed to quiver in that flickering light. He seemed just about to open his eyes and smile at her and be Pedro again.

For a long breathless second Zara watched him. Then she threw herself upon him.

"Pedro!" she cried. "Look at me, Pedro! It is Zara, your horrible little Zara! Forgive me, Pedro! I want you, Pedro! I only wanted *you!* I did not want a—lace—mantilla!"

At that word "mantilla," which had been dinned into Pedro's ears for five months, the door behind opened and a woman came in. But Zara did not notice her, for at the same moment Pedro's eyes

opened a little slit, he seemed to know that Zara was near him. He smiled. Then his hand began to work up to his breast.

"Sweet son, do thy ribs hurt thee?" murmured the woman, trying to place Pedro's hand at his side again, and pushing Zara away.

Zara, like a little panther, bounded back to Pedro, and glared at the woman. Then she looked down at Pedro, and at what she saw she stopped. She turned pale. She trembled. She put her hands over her eyes.

The woman saw. "A mantilla!" she cried, and ran her hands over it enviously.

But Zara, holding her eyes fast shut with her little fingers, dashed to Pedro's side. "I did not want a mantilla! I did not want a mantilla! I hate that mantilla!" she cried. Then she kissed Pedro furiously. "I only want you, Pedro!" she sobbed.

And Pedro opened his eyes a little speck wider, his look a whole warm embrace, his smile one of those beautiful smiles which dear mothers, dear fathers, sometimes give their children, and Zara suddenly knew that Pedro had forgiven her the price of the horrible mantilla.

SPAIN

X

The Boy Whose Christian Name Was Billy-Tears

WHEN that eminent young surgeon, Dr. W. McDermott Watt, was still a penniless medical student, he suddenly almost lost his eyesight. He had been studying too hard, and spending too many hours in the dissecting room, and he had reached that point in his education when he was unable to meet any of his friends, or any stranger, in fact, without mentally sawing that person's bones or cross-cutting into his tissues. And truly, any surgeon will tell you, if he is frank, that into his study of anatomy there came a time when he was incapable of talking with anybody without wondering how that person would cut up!

So when Dr. Watt, or Bill, as everybody knew him, nearly lost his sight, he had just reached this ghastly stage of his career. The oculists told him it was imperative that he rest his eye muscles, and also his brain muscles, and prescribed new surroundings and a warm climate.

"Rest makes me coo-coo!" said Bill, hotly.

His fellow students attempted to raise money to help Bill take a rest, but Bill wouldn't accept it.

"What you going to do, Bill?" they asked him in concern.

"Go to Spain!" said Bill, just to say something. "I have castles in Spain!" he added, airily, making what he considered a poetic bow.

"Well, now," said Bill's chum. "They say Noah's nephew went to Spain when he got out of the ark, and built the town of Saragossa. You goin' over and build a town, Billy?"

"Gosh," said the richest man in the class, who was also the wittiest, and the most traveled, "Old Noah's nephew must have lost his money then, and took to begging. I saw a million or maybe a billion beggars in Saragossa when I was there, and every one of them looked older than Noah himself!" Then he suddenly remembered that Bill was penniless, and that he himself had made a break, and he was wishing he could relieve his feelings by blushing, when Bill said:

"Saragossa's the spot for me! By Gad! I'm going there!" It tickled his fancy to think of all those ripe old beggars taking rest as a profession. He thought if he could work his way that far, he'd like to see how they did it. For himself he could not imagine how anybody could ever willingly rest, or ever willingly beg.

Bill put blisters on his hands working himself

across to England, and blisters on his feet walking himself through France. He also had earned something here and there, which he kept until he should see Saragossa. When he got there he meant to live at a hotel and enjoy himself,—looking at the beggars! It was a funny little whim—but he got a lot of rest just enjoying the notion. He figured he had just enough money to stay at a hotel in Saragossa for two weeks. He failed to earn a little extra money to throw to the beggars. Bill's big mistake!

He arrived on a Friday, the thirteenth, if that had anything to do with it, and took a room at the Hotel of the Universe. Before he had been there an hour his hotel keeper's wife had pointed out Fernando, who lay begging in front of the hotel, and gave the history of Fernando's family.

This Fernando had a wife and nine children. And all of them begged. So Billy could see how prosperous and well fixed they were, couldn't he? Fernando always sat in the shadow of the Hotel of the Universe itself, Signor, and invoked all the saints in heaven to smile on any stranger who gave him a *curato* for his blindness. Bill felt a pang of sympathy for Fernando's blindness, until he saw Fernando's eyes gleam, when somebody threw him a *duro!*

The wife of Fernando, it seemed, lay further up the boulevard, in the plaza, and invoked the saints for her lameness. Then how she could pick up and

run home nights! Eight of Fernando's boys played *pelota* with the street waifs, and when anyone came along they all asked "his worship to give them a penny for the love of God!"

Fernando's ninth boy lay beside his mother, and because he was really lame was the pride and joy of the household. Why not? Anyone could see in an instant how crippled he was, from his suffering little face to his scrawny little feet. And his father and mother had shown no end of cleverness in tying all sorts of unpatented bags, boxes, plates and nets about his tired little body to catch a stray penny. Yes, the Signor had only to go that way, and Fernando's eight brothers would adjure him by every wonder on the face of the earth to stop and look at that object of charity yonder; to give the *pobrecito* a glance out of his blessed eyes, and a *limosna* out of his most illustrious pocket!

But if Signor refused to look out of his blessed eyes, or take anything out of his illustrious pocket, it was then time for the mother to elevate her little lame boy before Signor, point out his poor little legs, and smirk upon that hopeless misery. It never failed to work, Signor, for of course it hurt the little boy when his mother picked him up suddenly and twisted him about so that the stranger might examine him. The tears would come into his big, soft eyes, eyes so deep and black they looked almost blue, almost like the periwinkle flowers which Americans call myrtle, but which

the Spaniard calls the "tears of Jesus Christ." And that is how he got his name, Signor, for his name was "Tears!"

When Bill heard all this he began to wish he had not come to Saragossa. If Tears was a real boy, how he must hate his name and his business and his lameness. How he must want to be a big boy who could run in the streets and play *pelota.* Even if he was the family pet and lived on honey and snails and mushrooms and eggs, how he must hate his life, and his town, and the strangers who threw a glance at his tortured little legs and a penny into his hot little hands. Tears must hate the world! Young Dr. Watt decided that he had better keep away from Tears. He had hardly a cent to spare, and the desire to saw up the bones of Tears' mother, according to the best he knew of Gray's Anatomy, he felt, would be almost too overpowering.

He was strengthened in this decision, when a day or two later the wife of the keeper of the Hotel of the Universe told him that she had heard Fernando saying that Tears had suddenly developed more of a lameness and a crying about his back, than about his legs. He moaned and groaned all day long now, whether his mother picked him up to show to strangers or not. His mother had to let him lie with his little body bent over her lap in just one position all the time, or he could not rest. Her legs and arms went to sleep trying to keep

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him in this position, and begging was fast losing its charms.

Dr. Bill had been in Saragossa just one week. He had just money enough to stay two weeks. If he could have walked the streets freely, as he had expected to, he could have forgotten Tears. But he was almost a prisoner in his hotel. If he stepped outside, beggars swarmed about him. Because he spoke American, he must be rich! Because he would not give, he must be stingy! They say Spanish is the language to speak with God, but at such hours Bill thought it sounded less than celestial! Far less! He wished he never had come. He wished he were gone! But Tears dragged on the heels of his spirit. He kept thinking of the boy's spine—and wondering if it couldn't be fixed this way—or that way.

So at last, just to rest his mind, Bill decided to take a look at Tears. Probably the little beggar was not half so sick as the Signora said he was! Certainly she showed great elasticity of imagination in the price of meals, that Signora! But suppose Tears really was as sick as reported, what could Bill do about it?

"Don't they have any hospitals? Why don't they send Tears to a hospital?" Bill asked.

"O—o—o! The hos—pi—tal was s—o—o—o many blocks away! Maybe ten! It cost so—o—o many *reales* to get the Signor Doctor!" About the price of a week's board at the Hotel of the Uni-

verse, Bill figured. He took a walk to think it over.

Nope, he couldn't see any hope for Tears, as he went into the dim, beautiful inside of the Cathedral Del Pilar to think it over. No hope for Tears, Bill had decided, as he came out of the Cathedral Del Pilar with the homely green and white and yellow domes on the roof. Domes which looked like soap boilers! The beggars swarmed about him now, and he wished the domes on the roof really were soap boilers, so that he could put every beggar in and sterilize him! He wished he were an American rag-picker by trade, and he could gather up all these beggars. Why, he could corner the rag market and scoop up a million dollars! If he had a million dollars he could afford—— Bother! he had settled Tears, and here he began to think of him again!

Tears' mother was just saying to the lady beggar squatting next her, because mercy, yes! there was a beggar for every streak of light and a beggar for very streak of shadow down the long arcade on the plaza. "Ah, me," she was just saying, "beside the prickling of my hands, there is such a buzzing in my ears!"

"It is the sound of a leaf falling from the tree of life," said the next beggar lady unconsolingly.

"It is a sign that something very strange will happen," said the beggar gentleman on her left.

At that moment Bill appeared. Should he know

Tears when he reached him? Ah, yes, there he lay, poor littl brat, asleep across his mother's knees. Even at that distance Dr. Bill noticed how unnatural was Tears' position, and his heart opened within him.

The mother of Tears hated to wake her little son, especially since he had become so peevish, but here was a desperate case; the stingy stranger they had all talked about, who was so rich and who gave to nobody! Her professional pride was pricked. Let the world see this man who gave to nobody, give to Tears! She would show what a fine beggar she was, what a never-failing blessing was Tears!

Bill started to pass by. She cried out to him to look at this object of charity, and shoved Tears up under Bill's eyes.

Awakened so roughly, Tears let go of the little sob with which he had fallen asleep. Then everything seemed to happen. It was almost as sudden and quite as much a miracle as when the great old bronze Madonna on the steeple whistled down on her virgin wings to the feet of the Spanish Grandee.

Bill didn't whistle down to the feet of Tears, but he snatched him out of his mother's astonished arms. It was absolutely no use to try to talk American to a woman who understands no American, so that all he said was in the nature of a soliloquy.

"Crazy woman, don't dare handle that kid like

that! Don't you know you are laming him for life! Here, now, just a second! Listen to that!" and Doctor Bill who had been hurriedly feeling the bones of Tears' little spine, suddenly snapped two of them back into place.

Tears' mother screamed! the stranger was breaking his bones! The beggars from all around swarmed about him. Bill picked up Tears and ran for the Hotel of the Universe, but Fernando and a host of his tribe rose in the path!

"Now don't get all steamed up!" said Bill. "Give me half a chance and I can fix up this kid, and don't believe I can't!"

The keeper of the Hotel of the Universe followed his wife into the tumult. Dr. Bill explained that he only wanted a chance to lay the little fellow down on a quiet bed and get the nearest surgeon in consultation. If they would let him do that he could make Tears walk! Bill won. But Signor Fernando and his wife, the Signora, kept a close watch. They gave Bill the ugliest stares, and Bill was just saying to them, "Yes, Dear Sir and Dear Madame, if words could poison me, I should even now lie cold at your feet," when the surgeon from "So—o—o—o" far away came into the room.

"Gad, boy, you did it!" he said in the Spanish equivalent as soon as he had felt of Tears' little spine. "By gad, boy, you're a wonder!" He looked Bill over more closely than he had examined Tears. He made Bill tell him his name, and why

he was there, and why he had spent his last cent (Bill could not disguise the flatness of his purse) to bring a surgeon to a little boy he had never seen before.

"Oh," said Bill, "I sold myself the idea that the kid could walk. What are we going to do with him now? He can't lie and beg on the pavement! He needs a plaster corset and a nice little cradle for about two months, doesn't he, doctor?"

The end of it was that the surgeon from S—s—s—s—o far away took Bill and Tears back to his hospital with him. He was short of doctors, and, oddly, he had taken the most unaccountable fancy to Doctor Bill. And Bill, oddly, had taken as strange a fancy to Tears!

It was Christmas day when Tears' mother came to take him home again. "Child of gold! Child of silver! Child of pearls!" she cried when she saw him walk.

He led her into a room where lay a world of boys. A tree as tall as a mountain glistened with candles, sticks of caramel sugar and "Angel's hair" candy. Yes, it was Christmas, when all the world sang. Even a squad of bigger boys came in and sang a *canzonet* all about the birth of the Holy Child, and after saluting the Virgin, and Joseph, and the Holy Christ Child, made their adieux even to the cattle in the stable, singing, "Adieux, Sir Ox; Adieux, Sir Mule! May God be with you!"

But the very, very, *very* last thing, just before

Tears left, somehow he and Dr. Bill found themselves in each other's arms. "Buck up, Billy, little lad," Dr. Bill was saying. "I'll tell the world we're great stuff, you and I!"

"My name is not Bil-lee," said Tears, in plaintive Spanish.

"Oh, yes, it is," said Dr. W. McDermott Watt, "that's my Christmas present to you—Billy-Tears!"

CHINA

XI

Little-Sister-Two Is Stolen

THERE was mourning in the house of Little-Sister-Two's honourable father. The lamps and doorsteps and signs at the front door had been changed from their every-day red to white. In the front parlour (or whatever they called the room) Honourable Parent sat as stiff as a poker in one of the teakwood chairs ranged primly along the wall. On either side of the room a long line of prim old men kept him company. For Little-Sister-Two was gone! On the sixth day of the eighth moon, which was the day *before* the day before *that* day, Little-Sister-Two had vanished! Pouf! Out of the house! Out of the very air—just like that! And nobody could find her again!

It was the height of the festival of the Friendless Ghost, when wealthy Chinamen, who own sing-song girls, bring them out to sing for guests at great feasts! When preparations are already being made for the Harvest Moon festival; at which time thanksgiving is made to the gods for all the bless-

ings of the year; at which time one must pay every debt. Yes, it was at this busy time of year that some old friendless ghost, probably Little-Sister-Two's dead-and-gone husband, had snatched her right out of the family!

Little-Sister-Two had been the very prettiest widow in all China. Her eyes were as slanty as a kitten's. Her cheeks were as heavy with paint as an idol's. Only a bold, bad little girl would go with her cheeks shamelessly unpainted in China! Little-Sister-Two had worn the darlingest satin coat and trousers of bright orange, all embroidered over with roses. Oh, and I forgot! She had worn her hair in a stiff roll over one ear, and twined with the stunningest paper flowers! You know what that meant, don't you? Well, it meant that she was quite properly and honourably engaged to a man her father had picked out for her to marry. So you see, that although she had been born a widow, having been married before she was born to an old, old man, she had now outworn her widow's weeds, and could marry again. Of course her aged bridegroom had taken a chance, as she might not have happened to be a girl, but then she would have had to marry one of his family women! —instead of himself!

And now she was gone—gone in her orange suit, which was bright enough to be seen a mile-and-a-half! They took her Honourable Parent his blackened pipe for consolation! They filled it with fra-

grant leaves and lighted it for him! They lit the tapers before the shrine of the ancestors! And away back in some corner of the house Little-Sister-Two's mother wanted to cry her eyes out with fear and grief. Of course in China, women, like proper copy-book children, are neither seen or heard. Honourable mothers must not even weep. It simply isn't done!

It so happened that the oldest and most illustrious of the old men who kept Little-Sister-Two's father company in the front parlour (or whatever they do call that stiff and frightful room where he sat) got to looking more and more queer every moment that passed. Louis Ying his name was, and he was the person who was actually engaged to marry Little-Sister-Two! More and more of the whites of his eyes got to showing, until he looked a good deal as if he were trying to peek through at the works in his brain!

Of course it would have been horrid etiquette to say a word, I suppose, and not a man there but looked as peacefully mournful as if he had just gone into a trance. But all of them noticed Louis Ying's strange behaviour (turning one's eyeballs wrong-side-out is strange behaviour, if I am any judge), and though they kept on looking so calm it made you nervous to watch them, they were just eaten up with curiosity.

What was Louis Ying thinking about?

Did he *know* something he hadn't told?

Was it something about *Little-Sister-Two?*

Well, of course old Louis Ying was no detective, but an idea certainly had occurred to him, which was just about churning his stomach upside down with excitement (Chinamen keep their brains in their stomachs, if you ask them), and he wondered he hadn't thought of it before. As soon as was at all dignified, probably hours afterward, he left that roomful of prosperous appearing undertakers (or that's how they looked) and started out to chase up his clue.

Don't ask *me* how Louis Ying worked his brains. I'd rather figure out a Chinese puzzle. But anyway, he went straight from that house of mourning to a feast! He knew a very rich merchant who gave wonderful dinners and was rich and dignified beyond compare. He owned sing-song girls. They sang at his feasts. Sometimes he boasted about them, the way very rich heathen will do!

Louis Ying took a seat beside this rich Chinaman, and began very merrily to eat his dessert. (Dessert comes first and soup last in China.) Louis started the rich old man talking about his sing-song girls, how many he had, and how many he would like to have, and how beautiful they were and how much they cost him, and all that. And then Louis said, "Well, old fellow, maybe you think these sing-song girls of yours are good-looking, but *I* don't!" (or insulting words to that effect).

The rich man nearly fainted from surprise and wrath. Here was Louis Ying eating his illustrious pudding and sitting by his illustrious side and telling him his sing-song girls were HOMELY!

"I'll show you!" he bubbled—and steamed—in his wrath. "I shall have them in immediately. You shall look well at them while they sing for you!"

"Cat's foot!" rejoined Louis Ying. "I've seen every one of the old batch. Show me some new ones!" (or words to that impertinent effect).

The rich old merchant regarded Louis with a long, unloving stare. Then a different look came over his heavy face. "Ha! ha! Louis, my friend," he said, smiling (or words which meant the same), "I begin to see through you and your ridiculous bluff. You want me to show you the new sing-song girl I bought of Mr. Wong, don't you? I boasted to you about her beauty. I told you I had paid $325.00 cash for her unusual beauty, did I not? And now you want to see her, my friend, before she is trained to sing? Is it not so?"

But instead of directly answering his question, Louis Ying very Yankishly asked him another. "So you bought her of Wong, the little shopkeeper, did you?" he asked. And when the old merchant nodded, Louis Ying began to turn his eyes wrong-side-out again, in the frightful way he had done at Little-Sister-Two's house. Which I

submit is not the way for a guest to look, either when he sips your pleasant soup, or mourns your darling daughter.

Louis Ying did not hurry through his dinner, but at the end of that day he came to the little shop of Mr. Wong and waddled in. Mr. Wong, who lived next door to Little-Sister-Two's father, was not expecting anybody, or he certainly would not have been sewing his kimono onto himself, would he?

Old Louis Ying did not even know Mr. Wong as well as you do, but he went straight over to him and took a good look at his sewing, which I believe was the most impolite of all the impolite things old Louis Ying had done that day.

Instead of jumping up and giving him a left to the jaw, Mr. Wong began to tremble like an asparagus fern in an earthquake. He dropped his needle and picked it up and turned a poisonous green (the effect of blue fright under a yellow skin, no doubt), tried to sew, pricked his thumb, and said a few hasty words in Shanghai-ese which meant, "I wish you would mind your own business, you dizzy old nightmare!"

Louis Ying, who had been looking all around Mr. Wong's little shop in the most inquisitive manner, now bent over Mr. Wong. He put his hand into Mr. Wong's coat and drew out three bars of gold! Three whole bars of gold which Mr. Wong

had been sewing so neatly into the lining of his kimono!

"What are these?" asked Louis Ying, holding the three gold bars and staring and staring at them.

Mr. Wong looked ready to faint. "Do not tell on me," he implored. "I was a poor man. I owed one hundred dollars. The Festival of the Harvest Moon was coming on. I had no money to pay my debts. What should I do? I ask you, as man to man, what on earth could I do?"

"Do?" said Louis, handing back two of the bars of gold, but still holding the third one in his hand, "you could sell your family jades in the street, perhaps?" But he knew Mr. Wong had no family jades. Mr. Wong was the kind of a poor man who has neither a family or jades.

"I had none," said Mr. Wong, dejectedly, as he saw the bar of gold still lingering in Louis Ying's fingers.

"What did you do?" asked Louis, very sternly.

"Well, it was like this," uttered Mr. Wong. "And if I give you my bar of gold for hush money, as you seem to expect, you must never breathe of what I am about to utter!"

"Oh, I won't," said Louis Ying affably, and slipped the bar of gold into his own kimono. "Just trust me with your secret, and I'm much obliged for the gold, I assure you!"

"Well, then," said Mr. Wong, looking dubious,

but somewhat brighter, and beginning to sew the two bars of gold back into the wadding of his jacket very fast, "you know my neighbour next door, don't you? Or maybe you don't. He is one of the chicken-livered Sen Suey Folk tong, which is a peaceable tong. It settles its disputes with spot cash and not with the gun!" Here he gave way to a homely sneer which showed up all his disdain and wrinkles. "Such a tong has no teeth! One could laugh at such unblushing peace people! So when I had no money and $100.00 cash debts, I simply snatch the most beautiful of my neighbour's daughters,—like this—ha! ha!—and sell her for $325.00 for a sing-song girl, while her family mourn! Now I have paid my debts and I still have two bars of gold. I will go to Ningpo and take a boat, tra-la! How happy I am! My troubles are ended! But, magnificent Sir, since you have taken a whole gold bar for hush money, see that you tell no one!"

"No, of course not," said Louis Ying, with his tongue in his cheek, and immediately left Mr. Wong to his empty shop and his sewing.

Now of all the amazing behaviour of Louis Ying that day, this last was the most amazing. He of course knew exactly where Little-Sister-Two was, yet he never lifted his finger that night. He simply went home to his old and impossible bed with Mr. Wong's hush money in his kimono and never did a *thing!* But next morning, honestly you

would have thought *next morning* he would have got her, being engaged to her, and everything, wouldn't you? But no sir! he never stirred a finger. Nor the next day. Nor the next. If he had had the imagination of a canary bird he must have known that Little-Sister-Two wasn't feeling any too gay. Even in her satin coat and pants of bright orange!

But somehow or other, a week after that, just as the wicked Wong was blithesomely boarding his boat at Ningpo, he was arrested! Yes, sir! Just the moment he put his foot to the boat. Such refined cruelty is too mysterious for me. Maybe it was just Louis Ying's idea of a joke. That same day, however, and that same hour, there came into the funeral room of her father's, the bird-like pattering of Little-Sister-Two's feet. Orange coat and all, Little-Sister-Two had come home!

Did her father rear up from his teakwood chair and throw out his arms and hug her? Well, I guess not! You mustn't judge the ceremonious Sen Suey folk by the impulsive Louis Ying. The Illustrious Parent just sat there and sat there, and on the other side of the room Louis Ying sat there, and Little-Sister-Two might have been a sudden orange-coloured ghost for all they seemed to notice. But in the back rooms of the house poor little fluttering Sister-Two found warm mother arms waiting for her; and her sisters, One and Three,

squeezed her; and her father's son smiled upon her, and life began again.

Little-Sister-Two's father *had* noticed her, however; he was glad she was found and everything, just like a regular parent. For that very night a beautiful pair of blue jade earrings found their way up the stairs to Little-Sister-Two. Another present came also, a mysterious present all done up in wrappings like a mummy; a present from her engaged-to, and about-to-be-married-to, Personage, Louis Ying, who had sat downstairs in the teakwood chairs these days of mourning. After Little-Sister-Two had unwrapped and unwrapped and *unwrapped* it, it lay in her hand at last—a single bar of gold!

So you see that even in China people do steal from Peter to pay Paul. Steal Peter's daughter, in fact, which is rather putting on the finishing touches. People are stunningly alike wherever you go, even when their names are Ring-Ting-Ling instead of just Judy or William.

JAPAN

XII

The Gift of the Bronze Bull

TOSHI hated to miss the party. She could hear Aki in her garden next door already counting out:

"Dzui—Dzui—Dzukorobashi—
Gomamiso—Dzui—
Chu—Chu—*Chu!*"

Whomever Aki pointed to when she said that last "Chu!" would be the fox, and all the other little girls would be chickens and run away from her.

Toshi had told her mother she was going to that party too! And she had told her grandmother, and her father. And they had let her put on her newest, sweetest kimono. And all the time she knew she wasn't going! How could she, when there was something else so necessary to do? Something for her very own mother?

The point of the whole matter was, that something had happened to Toshi's mother. First she had been very sick, days and days sick, and then when she got better she was very weak. Just weak

all over and limpsy. She could hardly look at you out of her eyes. And then she got strong everywhere else but in her eyes. Now it was said that she must go to the hospital.

"What will they do to my mother at the hospital?" Toshi had asked in alarm.

"Oh," her grandmother said, "somebody will put big bandages over your mother's eyes, and when they take them off again she will see!"

Toshi looked square at her grandmother, and somehow she began to be afraid.

"They will take my mother away and never bring her back!" she thought in the most private part of her heart. And at that moment she decided to keep her mother from the hospital and the bandages and everything. But she did not dare tell anybody her plan. Her father, who was a most illustrious person, and wore twelve kimonos when he went out in society to dine (some fathers sport only seven or eight kimonos for company purposes and look skinny indeed), her illustrious father had been educated far East beyond the sea, and he would only have laughed at what Toshi was going to do.

So Toshi ran in and said good-by to her mother, and slipped the little piece of silk one wraps up presents in, into her long sleeve, and then ran in and said good-by to her grandmother, and then pushed back the sliding doors of the house and stepped into her wooden shoes. Then out through

a big closed gateway, with a little door at one side, and now the bamboo fence on her side of the street, and the cedar fence on the other side of the street, hid her from all but the tiled roofs of the houses.

In the next garden she could hear Aki squealing, and a fierce little girl-fox crying, "Kong-Kong! Kong! Kong!"

She did not stop to listen. With her long sleeves swinging, the red linings showing, she ran on. She had planned exactly what she should do. She would go to the temple, you know, the gold and glittery one where the gorgeous bronze bull stood. This bronze bull was a marvel. Really he was. If you had a pain in your leg, you rubbed your leg against the bronze bull's leg and that would take the pain away. Really it would. Toshi's friends in school all knew people who had tried it! Just the same with earache. Rub the bronze bull's ear! Oh, really! Honestly and truly! People came from all over the whole world to rub the bronze bull and get well. No matter what was the matter with them, bubonic plague, or pleurisy, or tuberculosis, or sore throat, all they had to do was to rub the bull's lungs or neck with their lungs or neck, and it worked!

Toshi had suggested that her august father take her mother to the bull and let her rub her eyes on the bull's eyes. He actually turned pale at the notion, and said a lot of heathen words about

"germs" and "contagion," and looked almost willing and ready to spank poor Toshi.

It was no use talking to older people. They always thought they knew so much more than children. Toshi knew quite well that when *she* grew up she would listen to everything *her* little girl told her and do it, too. She would show *her* little girl that she understood that little girls *did* know something. And her husband would feel exactly the same way!

At that, Toshi reached the temple. Perhaps you wonder what good it would do her to go near the Bronze Bull without her mother. Well, she had brought the little piece of silk in her sleeve to rub the bull's eyes with, and then she would carry it home and rub her mother's eyes with it! Wasn't that a good idea? You see little girls do know something, sometimes!

There was a crowd of people all about the temple. An old priest with long white whiskers had been preaching, and Toshi could hear all the people raising their voices together in the closing invocation, "Namu amida—dabutsu! Namu amida—dabutsu! Namu amida—dabutsu!"

Toshi suddenly felt very slender and timid, and *young,* not at all like the self-confident Toshi, who a moment before was willing to assure her own little children that they knew something. There was a group of pilgrims before the Bronze Bull, waiting a chance to smoothe out his contours with their

aches and pains. Toshi felt herself crowded in amongst them, and oh, but some of them smelled queer! She clung tightly to her little piece of silk, and she thought she waited hours. Suppose Aki's party should be all over before she got home, and her honourable father should find out where she had been! Suppose she should get her kimono soiled and torn in this awful crowd? Suppose—— Suppose they should take her mother to the hospital before she got home?

With that terrible thought in her heart she wriggled and twisted in among the pilgrims, in and in and *in!* She could hardly breathe, they smelled so queer! She could not see, they were so tall! They groaned! They grumbled! They moped! They scowled! They surged forward, and Toshi surged forward with them pressed by gaunt elbows, squeezed by bony arms and legs and crutches. But oh, she was glad it was hard, because she was doing it all for her mother!

Now the man in front of Toshi went up to the Bronze Bull. He did what many had done before him—he rubbed his eyes on the eyes of the bull. Then he turned and Toshi saw that his eyes looked oh, so ragged and red—horrible eyes! At that Toshi held up her little piece of silk to rub the bull's eyes, and could not reach!

Oh, she must! It was for her mother! With a sob she reached again! The cripple behind her held her up. With a supreme sigh of gratitude

she polished the bull's great eyes with the little piece of silk, and then the cripple let her down again. Very carefully she folded the silk and put it into her long sleeve and ran out of the temple!

Every few minutes she had to stop and see that her piece of silk was securely folded, and safe in her sleeve, so that the magic would not fall out. In fact, she stopped so often for this purpose that she gave rather the look of a little bird who tries to count its feathers (if little birds ever do). When she came to the street where rowdy little children hang about, little girls with rough, homely kimonos and all seeming to wear street-car conductors' caps, or old felt hats of no particular shape, and every size, she began to attract a great deal of notice. She must be carrying something precious in her sleeve, if she had to be so careful about it! They crowded around her. "Give us some! Give us some!" they cried.

Toshi looked at them despairingly. How could she make them ever understand? She tried to push past them. They were a wall of intent little eyes.

"Give us some! Give us some!" they cried again.

She put her hand into her sleeve. The piece of silk was still there! "I haven't anything!" she cried. She pulled out the little piece of silk. It looked quite empty, though she was careful to keep it folded. "See, that is all I have!" she said.

They snatched it from her. They felt of it. They threw it from one to the other. Then they flung it in her face. Before she could catch it, it fell to the ground.

Before she could pick it up they began to push her. To scream at her. To say ugly words to her. Toshi trembled with fright. If only she could go back and pick up the precious piece of silk. Perhaps the Bronze Bull's healing would not be quite all lost. Perhaps she would have time to run back to the temple and rub him again!

Then suddenly they let go of her—the cruel children left her; when she went back and found the poor little rag of silk, and brushed off the dust and straightened out the torn and rumpled little mess of it, she saw quite clearly that its magic was gone! It had all been wiped off on the sidewalk! And it was getting dark! She must run! She must run home, with no healing for her mother's eyes! The tears started to her own eyes. And then and there, like every other Eve-child, she had a good cry, right where she stood, carefully wiping her eyes on the poor dirty little piece of silk.

When she got home she forgot to call "Gomen nasai" as she entered. And that was like ringing the bell! She had slipped off her wooden shoes and left them on the doorstep. But she did not forget to go to her grandmother and bow very low and respectfully, saying: "Grandmother, I have come back!" She was just about to turn and go to her

mother, and salute her in the same way. But her grandmother called her back.

"Do not cry, Toshi," said her grandmother gently. "Your mother has gone to the hospital. To-morrow, if all goes well, you and I shall be allowed to go and see her!"

Toshi clung to her grandmother. Why couldn't anything ever happen right? If only she had got home in time! If only!

She cried and cried all night long. The next day her eyes were red and swollen. She could hardly see out of them! Her father came and looked at her eyes.

"Perhaps she caught it from her mother," he said. He had a doctor come. No, the trouble with Toshi's eyes was not the same as her mother's trouble. Where had she been?

Toshi turned so white when he asked her that—oh, so sick and scared! When one's eyes are closed, how anybody can read everything hidden in the cubby-holes of one's soul! Toshi could feel her father reading her secret, how she had gone to the bull,—now that her eyes were closed. She told him in little gasps and chokes—all—everything. She could not see the paleness of his face, as she told him about the blind pilgrim with the red, ragged eyes, who rubbed the bull's eyes just before her. She could not understand what he meant when he said, "The gift of the Bronze Bull!" She had gone and wiped the old bull's

eyes. The old bull had not come and secretly given her a present!

They took her to the hospital, and she had a bed beside her mother's bed. Her mother's bandages were off already, they told her. Toshi would have to wait awhile to have her own bandages taken off. But she did not care—much. Being near one's mother, blindfolded, is better than being away from her, even with fifty-million-hundred eyes!

XIII

When the Goblins Got Estan

USUALLY policemen don't start out to catch a goblin. Not in America, anyway, as I ever heard of. But this wasn't America, but the Philippine Islands, and Manila especially. And almost anything can happen there, as Sir Francis d'Estcotte could have told you.

Sir Francis had an American mother and red-white-and-blue blood corpuscles; and his name, which stated in full much abashed him, went something like this: "The very right Honourable Sir Francis Charles Archibald Toulkes d'Estcotte."

The police of Manila called him "Frankie" for short, which pleased him. He was known to have more brains and less pay than any other policeman on the force, and quite in line with his becoming youth and sagacity, was sent out to solve any "cases" which puzzled the force. Frankie usually solved them, too, just as if he had been a high-priced detective.

Nobody knew there would be anything to solve, however, when Estanisiao Puyat first appeared on

the scene. He was a native Filipino, and it was believed that somebody had tried to drown him in the bay. He had been soaking in the water forty minutes or so when a ship captain spied him, dropped a noose over his head and hauled him ashore.

"Oh, my very aunt!" said Frankie, looking him over. "I don't wonder somebody tried to murder the animal!"

Estan did look more than usually horrible. His wetting had changed him from a natty young thing of twenty-nine summers, to an old and uninteresting piece of pulp. Besides, he had four eyes! Just marvel at that!—four large, horrible, declassé eyes! Two of them were the regular eyes anybody would be expected to have, underscored by the two other eyes. These latter optics were neatly stencilled in livid blue tattoo marks upon his brown cheeks. With his upper eyes closed, and his lower eyes staring wide open, he looked like a twin brother to the Gob-ble-uns Little Orphant Annie used to tell about. And don't think he didn't!

Even Frankie, who never was known to show surprise, frankly whistled. But he had little time to admire Estan, for other people in Manila were having their trials that day.

"Eighteen-year-old boy thrown out of second story window," came the first telephone message, with details.

"Fancy!" Frankie remarked, and jotted that

down. The 'phone rang again: "Woman, sixty-five, stabbed in eye!" Frankie jotted that down.

"Hands cut off two unknown women!" came the third message. "What?" said Frankie, wondering if anybody was trying to play a practical joke.

"Filipino woman, forty years old, slashed by bolo in face," came the fourth message.

"Keep it up, keep it up!" Frankie replied, with sardonic cheerfulness. They did keep it up.

"Chinese storekeeper slashed. Wounds serious."

"Chinese cart driver slashed in shoulder."

"Filipino woman wounded on forehead and left arm."

"Eight-year-old Filipino child struck ugly wound on neck."

"Eighteen-year-old Filipino girl struck nasty blow on head."

The messages came in in a procession, just like that, and stopped. Frankie frankly stared at the 'phone. "Lots of zeal this cheery morning, what?" he drawled at length, when he seemed to consider that he was awake. "I believe the beggars get damaged just to bother me," he complained to Bill, the youngest, newest policeman on the force.

"I'd say it was the work of a Begani, if you ask *me*," said Bill.

A Begani is a man who goes out and kills ten men. He doesn't care what ten men. He has never

seen or heard of any of them before, probably. But he will be considered a man of valour and be allowed to wear a full red suit and look like a fireman for the rest of his life, just because he has killed ten men. After he has killed two or three men, and seven or eight women and children (females do not score so high), he is called a Half-Begani, and wears a red and white suit like a fireman who fell up to his waist into a lime barrel. This is an old Philippine custom, and nobody has any business to feel peeved if a Begani takes a notion to pick on him. He would much better take out his concealed weapons and blow the Begani's head off, and start in to out-Begani nine other Beganis, if you understand what I mean.

"Well, I do infer," said Frankie, "that bein' a Begani is one of the brightest little things a native chap can jolly well do. A Begani, however, does not bash people in the eye, arm, forehead or shoulder. He only kills them, what-what-what!"

"He might have lost his nerve, just at the critical moment," said Bill. "There you have me," Frankie returned. "But whoever he is,—if he's responsible for all those crimes, he almost made a complete job of the merry little Estan. I say, Bill, go on in, while he's dryin' out, and get a description of the man who drowned him, will you? I'm going out and play around the streets awhile."

"Round up the culprits, hey?" Bill asked. "Righto," said Frankie, and went.

Bill stalked in to Estan, who although not yet vivacious, was sitting on a chair; Bill implored him in terrific Spanish to tell him what had happened.

Estan immediately let forth torrents of Tegalog, a language he was fond of, but which sounded like a Himalayan dialect to Bill. He, however, ended up by saying in his own peculiar Spanish, which was not the kind of Spanish you learn by the book, but the kind which is washed up from the sea, "De Malas! de Malas! de Malas!"

"Uh-*huh!*" said Bill. "De Malas must be the name of the man who drowned him! Now go on, Estan. Tell Bill how tall this de Malas is, and whether he is light or dark complected, and everything about him. But for heaven's sake say it slow and say it SPANISH!"

Estan, however, refused to commit himself further. And Bill, becoming discouraged with his third degree, blessed Four-Eyes, as he called Estan, and left him with the remark that he hadn't the kick of a boiled potato. He had underestimated Estan, however, as further events showed.

Frankie returned some hours later leading a young Filipino bride by the hand. Which does not mean that Frankie had personally married her. She was dressed with the white *tapis* and *piña* cloth *pañuela* of a bride, although her hair was still ungathered in back, in the style of unmarried native maidens. Bill looked her over to see if she

were missing an eye or anything, but as she was not, he turned to Frankie.

"Say," he said, "Four-Eyes was drowned by de Malas. I got that much out of him. Ever hear of any criminal named de Malas?"

"Go away, Bill. Go quite away!" said Frankie, waving at him to leave the room.

"But say," said Bill. "You ought to look into that de Malas chap. He's running around loose, if you haven't got him!"

Frankie handed the Filipino bride a chair. "Do you know why so many people get murdered these days, Bill?" he asked. "It's because they're so maddeningly helpful, what-what-what!'

Bill hurriedly left the room. He heard Frankie talking to the bride in low, intimate tones. Suddenly she began to answer him with sobs and tears in a way no bride should cry. At that Frankie began to hum, and suddenly burst into song.

"*For I'm called little Buttercup,*" he sang through the closed door, "*Dear little Buttercup,*

"*Though I could never tell why, Billy——*

"*But still I'm called Buttercup, dear little Buttercup,*

"*Sweet little Buttercup, aye, Billy!*" At that he came out into the main office. "You've found out something," said Bill.

"Seek not to read my thoughts," Frankie told him sternly. "Manila seems likely to be the scene of no end of cheery funerals, ere long,

what? I'll just go in and speak to Estan now, and you see that Dolores in there doesn't take it into her head to walk out until I let her."

Bill kept an eye on the young bride, but he also wanted to hear what Frankie had to say to Four-Eyes. So he thoughtfully arranged it by bringing the bride out to sit in the Main office. It never occurred to Bill that she was in plain sight of Estan through the door, or that it was any harm if she were.

"Er, how-do-you-do, Essie, old thing," Frankie greeted Four-Eyes. Estan looked up at Frankie with a cold, unloving stare. English was not one of his accomplishments, and Frankie was talking English of a sort. "I'm the policeman," Frankie was saying, "just the bright and brotherly kind you'd expect" (here he made a jig-saw motion around his eyes), "and if I could get your pedigree and racing form as it were" (he dropped his voice to a melancholy note, and made as if to saw off his wrists), "I'd really know whether to hang you or give you my blessing, what?" He paused impressively and looked at Estan.

"Just look at me, you lovely old Thing," he continued, making a motion as if to stab himself in the shoulder. "Somehow your face and your eyes, Essie, do not inspire me to put things to your better feelings and all that sort of thing to which one does put things and so on and so forth." (He made a motion as if to slash himself across the

face.) "Somehow I do not feel sorry for you. I am ashamed to say that from your looks it would not have surprised me to find that you wore a red suit" (he made a motion as if wounding himself in the neck) "and had killed ten men! However you did not wear a red suit or even a suit trimmed with red" (he made a motion as if to give himself a nasty blow on the head), "but I wager that part wouldn't hinder you if you considered Beganiwork as one of the more restful hobbies, as it were, what? However, that's neither here or there! Now you look at me," and Frankie suddenly bent over him and pointed his finger at him. "Young man, you——

The moment Frankie bent forward there was a sobbing scream from the other room. Dolores had caught sight of Estan. Estan had jumped past Frankie, scratched her face, been caught by Bill. Dolores had made for outdoors in full terror and been caught by Frankie.

"I like that! By Jove, I do like that!" said Frankie indignantly to Bill. "I thought I told you——" But the screaming and yelling of Dolores and Estan became so deafening that both of them had to be locked up. "How'd you think I knew they knew each other?" Bill defended himself.

"You must understand," explained Frankie, slowly, "that she, Dolores, had a *dulce corazon,* a sweetheart, named Francisco, yes? He had built

a thatched *bahia* for her down near the bay. But her cousin, Estan, our Four-Eyes, said she must not marry Francisco. Instead she must marry him, yes? Dolores only laughed. She did not love Four-Eyes. She only loved Francisco. Francisco had saved enough money to pay the bell ringer, and hire a bamboo band their wedding day, to follow them from the church to the little new *nipa bahia.* But this morning, while Dolores tended to baking the pig and *camotes* and rice for the feast to-night, our jealous Four-Eyes threw Francisco out of a two-story window. Then he grabbed his bolo and ran down the street. Wherever he ran he slashed and he struck. It was *de Malas!* He was jealous! He yielded to his passion! Those ten crimes belong to him exclusively, and *de Malas* jolly well explains it. He was possessed of an evil demon for the moment, what? The Goblins got him! Don't mistake *de Malas* for a person next time, my dear little Billee! Oh, and then Four-Eyes tried to drown himself. Fancy!" Frankie went in and let Dolores out of her cell.

"Well, I hope nobody over here falls in love with me," mused Bill, fervently.

And Miss Dolores fervently crossed herself, although she understood not a word.

SOUTH AMERICA

XIV

Benny Sells Linoleum

IT was the coldest day of the winter, and as usual the janitor, who nearly suffocated them in mild weather, had to all appearances let the furnace go out.

Benny's father was deeply engrossed in a handful of steamship leaflets, and Benny himself was astride of the radiator, chanting,

"Absolute knowledge I have none,
But my aunt's washwoman's sister's son
Heard a policeman on his beat
Say to a labourer on the street,
That he had a letter just last week
Written in the finest Greek,
From a Chinese coolie in Timbuctoo,
Who said that niggers in Cuba knew
Of a coloured man in a Texas town
Who got it straight from a Circus clown,
That a man in the Klondike heard the news
From a crew of South American Jews,
About somebody in Borneo
Who heard of a man who claimed to know

Of a swell female society bird,
Whose mother-in-law was sure she'd heard
That her seventh husband's sister's niece
Has stated in a printed piece,
That she has a son who has a friend,
Who KNOWS—*when the coal shortage is going to end!"*

"Fine!" said Benny's father, looking up. "How would you like to go to South America?"

Benny, who had been singing at high speed, opened his mouth, but the question was too big for him. "What, Dad?" was all he said.

"How would you like to go to Rio de Janeiro with me?"

Benny slowly got down off the bleak radiator and started toward his father. "What, Dad?" he said again, but his wedge-shaped little nose had a look of prying into the question.

"I am going next week," said his father.

"Not—not down to *South America!*" Benny asked in an awed tone. "Not down where they's Inca Emeralds—and bushmaster snakes—and witch owls which lay a spell on you? You don't mean down *there,* do you, Dad?"

"Come again! I don't quite get you," said Mr. Russell. "Certainly I'm going to South America!"

"Why, down *there,*" said Benny, much excited, "the snakes are all as big as churches, and their fangs stick up like steeples! And you have to eat the arms of monkeys made into stew, and drink

sap from the cow tree for cream—and they's fishes no bigger'n a small trout can eat you up, or you can even get killed by ants! And vampire bats fly through your sleeping-porch screen and sting you to death and suck your blood. Honest, Dad, if there's where you're going (he gave a sigh of supreme approval), I call that great! Half the snakes aren't really dangerous," he added, "they just rise up in your path and look into your eyes as if they wanted to put a hand on your shoulder, and never bite or anything. It's just their way of being curious!"

Mr. Russell got up suddenly and put his hand into his collar, "How do *you* know so much about it?" he asked Benny, curiously.

"It's in the story of the 'Inca Emerald,' and they's cat-fish big enough to swallow you. They leap up at you when you sit in a boat, fishing, and pull you in the water and swallow you just like Jonah! And the toads and grasshoppers and frogs and cicadas scream and squall and groan all night long so loud you can't sleep. And all day birds squawk and mew and grunt and whine. And they's one that sings like a sobbing angel. Say, Dad, is that straight about you taking me?"

"I said I was going to take you to Rio de Janeiro," said Mr. Russell matter-of-factly. "That's a city. No snakes whining around the streets, Benny, and you want to forget all such bric-a-brac before you start. I'm no cross between

Balboa and Roosevelt discovering the Amazon! I'm going down there to sell the South Americans linoleum, the American brand. And when you remember, kid, that they've never bought a yard of linoleum from America, and that they think they can get it just as good and just as cheap from England, you can see I'm up against something more exciting than snakes or voo-doo owls!" He sat down again and shuffled the steamship catalogues. "I've decided to sail on Saturday," he said.

"What's the name of the boat?" Benny asked, still with a spark of interest. "Maybe we'll get shipwrecked!" And being told that the name of the boat was *Southern Cross,* and that they would not get shipwrecked, Bennie went out of the room forlornly croaking, "Mu-ru-cu-tu-tu!" Which, as everyone knows, is the song the witch owl sings in the South American jungle, when he would lay a spell on one in the darkness.

Benny, however, seemed unable to lay a spell on either his parent or the boat. They made a safe passage and came to the city of Rio de Janeiro through a harbour so surprisingly beautiful that even Benny's practical father was moved to words. "Look at that!" he told Benny. "What?" said Benny. "Those hills!" his father pointed out the vari-coloured mountains. "I thought you saw a crocodile or something," said Benny witheringly. At this period of his existence it is certain that Benny could have passed through the very gates of

Paradise, which the Harbour of Rio was said to duplicate, without a thrill. But had anyone come by and offered to sell him a single hair of a man-eating lion, for example, and Benny would have offered his soul, and every cent he had saved toward a new canoe, and considered it a bargain. Therefore it was especially difficult for him to keep his temper, when he knew he was almost within smelling distance of the terror by night, and the monkey that flitteth by day; of the jaguar that walketh in darkness and the tiger that wasteth at noonday. And he must stay in the city!

The city Avenue Branco was without doubt the most beautiful street in the world, and the fashionable shopping street, Moreira Cesar, was no more than an alley with beautiful buildings! The National Library and the Candelaria Church, the Municipal Theatre and the Fine Arts Museum stood as nothing in Benny's young life. He mourned that the World's Fair had ended. But one day he came bounding up the corridor of the hotel to his father.

"Hi, Dad!" he hailed him joyfully. "Guess where I been!"

"Where have you been, kid?" his father asked, but he did not seem at all energetic with his curiosity. In fact, if Benny had been given to noting his father's states of mind, he could readily have seen that Mr. Russell's optimism had sunk to zero.

Benny drew a long breath. "I been to the National Museum!" said Benny. "I couldn't think of anything else to do; and I just dodged a lot of glass cases of junk and was heading for the door to get out again, when an old guy snapped into the place with a trayful of jewelry! I didn't know they were jewelry at first, but the minute he came in they was lots of excitement, and men popped out from doors and bowed, and it was Signor This, and Signor That. And this Signor Jazz-a-paz-zaz-za, or whatever his name is, told how he had got these ornaments from the Chib-something Indians. Dug them up himself, and what wonderful skill was shown in making them. The gold is all mixed with silver, and I was peeking at it over a man with a long neck when he saw me. Say, Dad, he stopped talking to those fellows and told me a fight he had with a tarantula, and it was no fooling either. I'm going again to-morrow. He's going to put them in show-cases, and he said I could!"

"Hum," said Mr. Russell, unimpressed. "So you are interested in anthropology, hey, Benny?"

The next morning, however, Mr. Russell said he would go along with Benny to the National Museum. "Aren't you going to sell linoleum?" Benny inquired, struck for the first time by his father's tired eyes and shoulders.

"Not in South America, I'm not. Not a square foot. Not a square inch. Unless——"

"Unless what?" asked Benny, now fully awake

to his father's plight. "Won't they buy your linoleum?"

"Not as long as England wants to sell it to them," he said grimly. "I wish I could think of some way to curb old England's desire to spread all South America with linoleum!"

"Oh, you'll think of something," Benny said consolingly. "*You* aren't a Yankee for nothing, I'll tell the world!" For ever since Benny's mother had fallen asleep and had not waked up again, Benny had understood that he must, in his own way, take her place in his father's life. If she had been there, his mother would have taken his father's face into her two hands and kissed away all that worry.

Signor Jazzapazzazza, or whatever was his name, greeted Benny and his father as if they had been the King and Crown Prince of Portugal, and immediately began to show them the curious Indian jewelry. He told them how he was going to popularize those designs with all Brazil. Were they not beautiful? Were they not worthy of popularity? He would work them out in jewels and semi-precious stones such as the Signoras and Signoritas would rave about!"

"They're the snake's whiskers! I'll say they are!" Bennie agreed enthusiastically. "Gee, Dad, if you had those designs on your linoleum, wouldn't they be a whizz! I'll bet they'd *sell,* all right!"

Mr. Russell looked at Benny a full second, just

as the Giant Goliath must have stared at David when that young man hit him between the eyes. Then he drew a pencil from his vest pocket and a card from his *other* vest pocket. Would Signor permit him to sketch one or two of the designs? Oh, Signor was delighted, infatuated! Were they not charming? Beautiful? Did they not show how instinctively taste, skill, art, were part of the human soul?—when *Chibcha* Indians could produce designs which might have taxed a goldsmith in the Tiffany Studios of Signor's country to invent?

Mr. Russell replied that he had read somewhere that all races of men were of one blood, and continued to sketch rapidly. Then he and Benny bid the Signor almost an affectionate good-by, and Mr. Russell proceeded to send those sketches of Indian designs to his linoleum firm in New York with a request for samples of same worked out into their linoleum. He stated that his linoleums were of the right quality and price, but that unless he could offer the South Americans something more, they were already satisfied with the product they were receiving from England.

The New York firm answered as soon as possible that they were more than pleased with the new designs, and samples of same would follow under separate cover.

When these arrived, Benny had the honour of opening them. His father had the honour of selling

them. Not a firm but bought and bought. There was a sudden wild demand for these distinctively South American patterns. Signor Jazzapazzazza never in all his dreams had glimpsed such a popularity of the old Indian designs. His smile must have been half rueful, half pleased. He had dreamed of working out these patterns in gold and rubies, and already they stared at one from cork-inlaid textures! Such was the hustle of that so great America!

Benny decided after severe thought that he was not meant for an anthropologist, but a linoleum salesman. You were up against something more exciting than snakes or voo-doo owls all right! However, his father saw to it that before they sailed for New York, Benny took a trip up a dark river which smelled as queer as the old cable-car tunnel under the Chicago river on a hot day. Between themselves they called it the River of Death, just for fun, though it was not, and they entered it by night, as that was sure to bring three great evils down upon one! However, they returned alive, and Bennie isn't sure, if his father should happen to sell all the linoleum the world could need before he grows up, but he will be a famous adventurer. "Mu-ru-cu-tu-tu!"

MEXICO

XV

Maria and the Magic Book

HER name, the part she heard most, was Maria. The rest of it was de Guadalupe and sounded more like some kind of a melon than like the name of a ten-year-old girl, unless I tell you that she lived in old Mexico and had a rich tan skin and snapping black eyes that just went with the name. Maria had four worldly possessions—a green parrot, a small brother, a lace mantilla *and* a terrible temper. The lace mantilla had been her mother's—you can find out in the dictionary what a mantilla is—and, as her mother and father had been killed and weren't with her now, naturally she loved the mantilla.

Maria and her brother, Nachito, who was eight, lived with their cousin, Don Luis. Luis's last name meant Angels, and Maria and Nachito had thought he *was* Luis of the Angels when he first took them to live with him. It had been *very* lonely without Mother and Father, and Cousin Luis had a perfectly lovely white marble house. He got a duenna to live with them. The duenna

was a fat, purple-brown woman, who made the children do everything she wanted them to. She was supposed to be housekeeper and mother for Maria and Nachito. Most people would have called her a chaperon—that's what duenna means.

Maria found it was not nearly so much fun living at Cousin Luis's house as she had expected. There was almost nothing to do, and the duenna was *no* good as a playmate. The queerest part of it all was that they almost never saw their tall, handsome cousin. All day long he sat in a rather dark room in an armchair doing nothing. The duenna sat for hours every day reading to him in a sing-song voice. But when Maria came and stood outside the door, hoping to be invited in to get acquainted, the duenna would come hurrying out. "What do you want, Maria?" she would say. "No, you can *not* go in. You must run away. You must not bother your Cousin Luis."

"Oh, dear," said Maria one day to Nachito, stamping her foot as she spoke. "Wouldn't you think anybody would have more sense than to sit in a chair and do nothing all day? If he was any kind of a sport, he'd find something to do."

"I don't care what he does," said Nachito gloomily. "I wish I had something to play with."

It was just then that Maria got her lovely idea. They would ask the duenna to ask Luis to get them a donkey. Just the thing! Such a nice pet!

"You can't have it," said the duenna, firmly.

"You have your parrot, haven't you?" she added.

"*That old parrot!*" Nachito said then, and stalked angrily away. The next Maria knew, he had tied her beautiful black lace mantilla around the parrot's neck and wound it around and around his body, and ended it in a long train down his tail, and before Maria could stop him, had actually dared push that parrot, lace mantilla and all, into Don Luis's dark room!

"Nachito," screamed Maria, and jumped up. She was so angry with Nachito that she wasted several precious seconds trying to catch him. Then she burst into Don Luis's room.

"Where's my polly? Where's my parrot?" Maria demanded. But Luis only smiled kindly at her.

"There he is!" Maria screamed. For Signor Polly had climbed and clawed his way to the top of a window curtain where he had proceeded to wind himself and his draperies into the curtain. He looked too funny for words. He hung there now, making horrible noises in his throat. "Get him down! *Get him down!*" Maria screamed again. But Luis only sat there, staring at her.

"He'll choke! He'll die!" Maria cried, beside herself with rage. "Get him down, Luis!" and when he didn't move, Maria began to strike her cousin!

Of course the duenna came in then, and she spanked Maria before she took down the polly, so

that when he did finally come down he was—dead! Choked to death by the curtain and the mantilla. Cousin Luis of the Angels just sat and stared at nothing and never winked an eyelash!

Right then Maria's temper became her *greatest* possession, I'm sorry to say. The queer thing about it was that she forgot all about Nachito's part and just hated her Cousin Luis with all her heart. She wished and wished there was something perfectly awful she could do to him.

One day when she was outdoors playing, a man came along with a load of wire sieves tied on his donkey. Just then Maria saw the cook come out. Maria stopped playing to come up and look at the man's little donkey and see if cook was going to buy a new sieve. Then she saw a very strange thing. Instead of looking at the peddler's wares, cook walked up very close to the load and the man, with a quick motion of his hands and a glance to see that no one was looking, slipped something into cook's pocket. Then she turned around and he drove his donkey off down the road. Cook did not see Maria at all, and so did not suspect that a pair of black eyes were watching her as she stopped a moment before going into the house to peep into her pocket and pat what she saw there, while a sly, wicked smile came over her face.

Curious Maria ran at once into the kitchen and said, "What did the old man give you? Let's see

it, Esperanza, and if it's nice you've got to give me half!"

Then she stood still in astonishment because Esperanza looked as if she were going to have a *fit!* She turned first red and then purple and then white again. It was only for a minute, though, for after that she said lots of nice things to Maria, and gave her some sweet cookies. While Maria was eating them, she watched cook fixing a fine breadfruit on a plate. Slyly and almost without Maria's noticing, she took from her pocket a little paper and from the paper a pinch of white powder. This she sprinkled on the breadfruit. "I wonder if it's sugar," thought Maria. Then cook turned around suddenly, as if she had thought of something. She came close to Maria and said, "Will you carry this breadfruit up to your Cousin Luis?" Her voice sounded so odd that Maria stared at her.

"I hate my Cousin Luis," Maria pouted. "Let Anita carry it to him."

The cook smiled more queerly still. "No, you. Anita is not to see it, or the duenna or anybody."

It came to Maria then, that Esperanza didn't like Luis either, and that the old sieve man's present was something which Luis wouldn't like. The old breadfruit would make Luis sick perhaps! Well, she hoped so! She'd see that he got it!

So Maria took the breadfruit and started for Luis's room. The further she went, though, the heavier that dish seemed to get, until she could

hardly totter along with it. She stopped at every sound and looked all around. Then she would say, "He did kill my polly!" And that seemed to make her dish light enough so she could go on with it.

Maria stood still to listen at the door.

"Let not your heart be troubled; neither let it be afraid," the duenna read.

"Oh, dear!" Maria heard Luis say. "If I could only read this book to my people. I must try to learn it by heart so that I can tell it to them."

Just then Maria let the dish fall with an awful smash, for like a flash she had understood, as she heard Luis's words. I think she wished she was at the North Pole, or the United States—or some heathen, far-away place people read about in geographies, but no Mexican person ever really went to. For, you see, what Maria suddenly understood was that Luis was blind! Luis hadn't killed the polly! Now he was speaking in a gentle voice that made Maria ashamed. She rushed into the room crying and showed the astonished Luis the breadfruit and the white sprinklings, now almost dissolved. Excitedly, but with shame in her face, she told the whole story.

The duenna cried, "Ah!" she said, "they took your eyes. They will now have your life."

"No," said Luis, smiling, though he was very pale. "Not with you and Maria to guard me. And this!" He reached for the little book.

"Please, Cousin Luis," said Maria softly, with

no sign of her temper anywhere about, "tell me about this magic book, and why the cook and the sieve man should be wanting to kill you."

"Come here, Maria," said Luis, and took her on his lap. Then he told her the whole sad story. Years ago Maria's father and Cousin Luis's father had wanted to help their country. They had especially wanted to give people the best book in all the world to read. But there had been wicked men who did not want the poor people and common people of Mexico to be happier and better off and more educated. That was why there had been plots and schemes at the end of which Maria's father and uncle and her mother and other members of the family, too, had been killed. That was why Luis was blind. The old sievemaker, it seemed, though Maria could never tell quite why, belonged to those enemies of Maria's family and so he had hoped with Esperanza's help to put Luis out of the way.

"But," said Luis, at last, "we are going to keep on, Maria, you and I, doing right for our country, Mexico, and for the poor people. This magic book, as you call it, will show us the way. I want you to read to me out of it."

"But," gasped Maria, "I can't read."

"No," said Luis, "and so you must go to school."

And that was the beginning of wonderful times for Maria—happy times and useful times—for in

school she found plenty of playmates and plenty to do. But best of all, Maria thinks, is the chance to be eyes for Cousin Luis.

Maria read that book to Luis—not in one day or two. But, as she understood it better, she began to be a different Maria. She read in the book that love and kindness are better than temper, and happier, too. The Book and the school where she learned to read it, and the Sunday School and the teachers and Luis and Maria herself have among them completely done away with Maria's old temper. Now her most cherished possession is a small book which Luis gave her the day she first read aloud to him. Can you guess what it was? A copy of that same magic book, as Maria calls it.

XIII

The White Trash Princess and the Walking Doll

LINDY wanted a doll! A walking doll! A doll that could close its eyes and bend over and say "ma! ma!"

Although Lindy was nine years old and lived in Virginia, she never had seen such a doll, or any doll, or anything else, much, except mountains, all her life. She was a hidden princess, sort of, and more beautiful than you or I will ever be. Her hair was tansy gold, and her eyes morning-glory blue, and her cheeks the loveliest wild-rose pink in the world!

One remembers how, in the fairy book, the old king hid his princess high in a lonely tower, so nobody could harm her. And that is exactly what had happened to Lindy. Her mountain was the lonely tower, and she had been hidden, not for nine years, but for nine generations, ever since a certain unhappy prince and his princess sailed for America to forget their European troubles! Perhaps they escaped a great deal, finding those tower-

like mountains to hide in. Perhaps lots of to-day-kings have hungered and thirsted for such private mountains the past few years. But anyway, Lindy, with all this princess blood in her veins had forgotten—she did not remember how grand she was. She and her father and mother and twelve gaunt brothers had been emptied of all the enchantment by being hidden so long. They were queer folks, you'd think, to see them. They were poor. They lived in a hut. They slept on the floor together at night. They never wore pajamas. The mother just said, "Time to lay down," and like a lot of camels in the desert, they all just did lie down.

Well, how Lindy came to hear of any doll, any walking doll, was most mysterious. Perhaps her tallest brother, a young man who went out to work among the "furriners," which is what Lindy's folks called the outside folks like you and me, had seen such a doll. But the moment Lindy heard of the wonderful doll, she set her heart on one. She thought about it day-times and night-times, and although she knew she was too poor ever to have one of her very own, she thought if she could just once get a peek at one, just once, for one minute, she would live a great deal longer than if she didn't.

All winter long, when the roads were choked with snow, and the skies were full of scattered stars, like beads from a broken necklace, Lindy thought about the doll. When it came spring

again, she decided that she would spend the rest of her life sitting by the great highway, where the "furriners" sometimes slid by in their motors, until she should see such a doll. Some little "furriner" girl would be holding a doll in her arms, and she would look out of the window of her car, and the doll would look out with her. The doll, the walking doll, might even fall out somehow, and Lindy would pick it up, and hug it once, before she handed it back to the "furriner" girl. Dreams are queer prancy little things, aren't they?

Then spring really came, and sometime every day Kentucky found time to run down to the great highway and wait for the doll to pass by. There was a gully close by, and under the bridge, the meekest, twinklest little brook in the world. Most brooks roar at you, when spring sets them to business, but this little ribbon of water laughed and sang and ran along. Lindy sat beside it, day after day, and dreamed miles and miles and miles of walking dolls.

But as the sun grew warmer, and the snow melted from the mountain tops, the little brook became very big and fat. Folks said it had not risen so high in years. Lindy even took to climbing a tree just over it, so as not to get her skirts muddy sitting beside it. At last the little brook even dared run across the great highway.

Well, of course Lindy knew no "furriners" would come along the muddy highway, and she was

busier around home, and her mother was spinning and weaving and making her a gorgeous new dress, dyed, oh, the most entrancing brown. It made you think of beautiful rustley oak leaves, it was that kind of a brown; it made you think of humming birds' wings, it was *that* kind of a brown. It made you think of princes and princesses and fairy wands and witches, it was even as beautiful a brown as that! It almost made Lindy forget the walking doll, but not quite.

One day Lindy's mother let her put on the brown dress. Kentucky was going across to the other side of the mountain to see her little girl cousin, and that's why she was so all dressed up. Of course she went barefoot. The roads were still muddy, though the little brook had repented of its boldness, and now ran meekly under the bridge again. Kentucky stopped to watch it a minute, and that made her begin to think about the doll. She could see now how terribly foolish it was ever to expect a doll to ride down that road, any more than for the moon to roll down that road, and stop and let her pick it up. She was glad she never had told anybody how silly she was. This made her feel somewhat sad, and as there is nothing quite so pleasant as to feel sort of sad (when you are nine, or even nineteen), Kentucky was really enjoying herself.

She began to hear a humming, away off somewhere, like an overgrown mosquito, but as it was not time for mosquitoes, she ran across the muddy

highway and on up the mountain. Her little girl cousin, however, was not at home. It seems that she also had a new dress, and had run across the upper road to show it to Kentucky. The upper road was shorter, but Kentucky decided on the lower. "Furriners" *might* be riding by, they *might* have a little girl, the little girl *might*—— Oh, dear!—well, anyway, she just wanted to go that way. So she did.

The nearer she came back to the road again, the louder grew that mosquito humming which she thought she had heard before, an angry mosquito, who now barked and yelped and everything. Kentucky ran down as fast as she could, to see what the noise was about. Beside the brook was a great "furrin" machine. Stuck tight to the mud.

There was a great tall chauffeur-man, trying to jack up the car and get it out of the mud. There was a lady with curls and ribbons and red cheeks, bossing the chauffeur and saying sort of little roar-y things to him from out the back window of the car. There was another lady with straight hair and thick glasses who didn't say anything. And, oh, there was a little girl with darling tansy-gold curls, just like Kentucky's curls, and great blue eyes just like Kentucky's eyes, and she was dressed in a scolloped violet cape, and a scolloped velvet hat. Lindy, from behind a tree, stared and stared at her.

It suddenly seemed to Lindy that her own dear

new brown dress wasn't quite so beautiful as it had been. She couldn't think why. And she was wondering and staring at the "furriners" and guessing how soon they would ride off into the world again, when the chauffeur went and opened the back door to the car and helped the two ladies and the little girl out into the road. Then he bent down again and started to jack up the car some more, and the lady with the thick glasses got some stones and brought them to him to put under the back wheels.

Lindy, however, had no time to watch the homely lady with the thick glasses, or the pretty lady, either. She just simply *had* to spend every second watching the beautiful little girl. For that child had taken something out of the car with her, something stranger, far more wonderful than herself, and all dressed in scollopy violet velvet, too—a walking doll! The little doll walked beside the little girl, and then bent over and said "Ma! Ma!" as though she was a poll-parrot with a pain. Such a doll! Just then the roar-y lady, who had been fussing around and scowling around and saying things to the chauffeur, turned and saw the little girl walking her splendid doll right through the mud. Oh, dear! She sort of pounced at the little girl. "*Lucy!*" she cried. "*Look at your doll!*" At that sudden pounce, Lucy let go of her doll, and it rolled and tumbled head-first, velvet and all, into the brook!

Lindy, who had edged nearer and nearer, suddenly snatched up a stick, ran down to where the doll was immersed, caught it up by its velvet skirts and pulled it ashore. Then she held it out, dripping, to the beautiful little girl.

You can imagine, can't you, how surprised the little girl and the ladies and the chauffeur were to see Lindy. Of course Lindy had known all along that she was right there, but none of the rest of them had, and they couldn't have acted any more surprised if one of the little trees had pulled itself up by the roots and run down to snatch the doll out of the water. They all sort of peered at her, as if she couldn't be real. And when she held out the drippy doll on the end of the stick to them, none of them seemed to want to take it. The pretty lady began to scold the little girl, and the homely lady went to carrying rocks again, and the chauffeur bent double again, and there Lindy stood. Then the little girl began to cry, and Lindy, taking that wet doll off the stick and hugging it under her new brown arms, stepped right up to the pretty lady and said,

"Stop right thar! Don't you dare say nothin' agin' her no more. You ain't got any right to say it."

Well! that lady stopped. Her cheeks got redder. She looked ready to shake Lindy's little livers out of her. But just then a call came down the mountain which Lindy knew very well.

"Hey, Lin—dee!" rang the voice, "supper's ready."

My! The pretty lady looked at the watch on her wrist, the chauffeur looked at *his* watch, the lady with the thick glasses took her watch out of her belt as if it had been a spider which would bite her, and scowled at it. Then they all helplessly looked at each other.

But the beautiful little girl edged up closer to Lindy and said, "Hullo!" and Lindy said, "Howdy," and the beautiful lady said, "What shall we do?—I'm sure I don't know!"—just as if she were two persons talking together.

Lindy at once remembered her manners. "Purty bad fix you're in, ma'am. I'll be mighty glad if you would come up and set awhile. Mam's up at the house. She'll be proud to see you."

So that is how Lindy came home to supper leading a walking doll, dressed in violet velvet, and a little girl dressed in violet velvet, with two ladies and a chauffeur tagging behind.

"Pleased to see you, ma'am," said Lindy's mother, when they reached the cabin. "Come in and set down."

They all went in, but the "furriners" didn't seem to want any supper. "I reckon them fine folks is trying to be uppety with us," said Lindy's pap, but all the same, as soon as supper was over he and his twelve sons went down the mountain with the chauffeur to help pull the car out of the mud.

Lindy dried the doll's clothes before the fire, and then the beautiful little girl was willing to take it again.

The pretty lady talked to Lindy's mother, and the lady with the thick glasses looked at Lindy, while Lindy stared at the little girl. Through those thick glasses and homely eyes this woman looked and looked at Lindy's beautiful face, lighted by the fire, but she said nothing. And when the men came back to say that the car was pulled out of the mud, this quiet woman still said nothing, but she took little Lindy's face between her hands and looked deep into her eyes for a moment.

Then the "furriners" were gone, and after Lindy's mother had smoked her pipe and knocked out the ashes it was time to "lay down." Lindy took off her beautiful brown dress just as if it had been a common every-day affair. And all night a doll in a velvet dress walked through her dreams. Nothing else seemed to matter at all.

Do you suppose Lindy wondered even once, why *she* couldn't have a walking doll and a velvet dress perhaps? Why *she* had to stay high in the mountains where there was not a book, not a picture, not a thought except rough, every-day thoughts?

But if Lindy did not wonder, the quiet governess of the homely eyes and the thick glasses wondered a great deal.

"They are only poor white trash," said the

pretty lady easily, as they slipped out into the world again.

"I am going back to them," said the homely lady with a queer smile, "Lindy is the most beautiful child I ever saw. She is like a forgotten princess, asleep in an enchanted tower. Yes, I am going back. I am going to open a school. And I shall take Lindy the biggest walking doll I can find."

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